



EU CITIES MISSION

Transition Team Playbook

Orchestrating a Just Transition to Climate Neutrality





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Introduction

On the surface, the transition towards climate neutrality and increased resilience requires huge investments in new energy systems, the built environment, mobility and green infrastructure among others. Underpinning this, the speed and scale of these investments and transitions requires a fundamental shift in governing. **It is clear that accelerating a just transition cannot be achieved by any single organisation - whether a city, a national government, or a company - working in isolation.** A change of this scale and impact requires the commitment, drive, creativity and resources of a wide range of actors working together. The concept of a shared Mission supports this idea of moving towards an ambitious objective together in order to bring concrete solutions to some of our greatest challenges. As the [2020 Mission Board report](#) emphasises, this requires new forms of governance and collaboration to deliver impact.

Many cities across Europe and elsewhere are already exploring new ways of bringing together diverse actors and stakeholders, and enabling collective action across all sectors of society (NB we intentionally distinguish between actors and stakeholders, see the Glossary for further detail). In this document we outline one crucial part of doing this, namely setting up what we call a Transition Team, which brings together the municipality and the ecosystem of multiple actors across society. **There is no single blueprint for achieving this; each city will need to work in ways that best accelerate progress in its specific context.** However, there are some insights and lessons learnt that can be shared and built upon, and this document makes a series of suggestions.

Establishing and developing a Transition Team is integrally connected to a range of activities that Mission Cities are likely to undertake in Autumn 2022 and beyond.

- In order to visualise the change that many cities will undergo, using a systemic approach, we have developed a Climate Transition Map. Each city will start their journey at different points of this Map and the phases are not linear but we strongly believe that the fundamentals in this Map will hold true. As this Map shows, developing an inclusive local ecosystem for change with a strong mandate, both within the municipality and beyond, are foundational elements of the transition. The Transition Team can play a central role in achieving and strengthening these critical elements over time, as well as in achieving the other transition activities laid out in the Climate Transition Map.
- The [Climate City Contract process](#) has already started in many cities, and is about to start in the rest. The purpose of this governance innovation tool is to enable the acceleration of climate action in cities by generating stronger shared commitments, capacity and resources to act. Achieving a realistic pathway towards the 2030 goal will no doubt take several iterations of the Climate City Contract documents over the years between now and 2030. The emerging Transition Team can host the development and iteration of the Climate City Contract over time.





- We recognise that at this stage, many cities will primarily be focused on setting up or strengthening their internal municipal team with a strong internal mandate and resources. This may be challenging and take time in itself. A key success factor for this internal municipal team is to be set up (or evolved) with a clear understanding of the importance of working with a multi-actor ecosystem in new and inclusive ways. In this document we use the term Transition Team to refer to the team comprising multiple actors from across the city-wide ecosystem. The Transition Team has to be rooted in fertile ground within the municipality, and grow from these roots.

In many cities much is already happening to bring together diverse actors around ambitious climate efforts. A Transition Team can build on these efforts to mobilize a supportive environment in which multiple actors can come together to co-create, take bold decisions and learn. Across the Mission, we emphasise that many of the goals in the climate transition require us to include more than just innovation partners from academia, other knowledge institutions, and the private sector - often referred to as a city's 'innovation ecosystem'. These actors play a very important role, but so do the neighbourhood groups, cooperatives, civic networks, and other members of civil society whose approaches and ideas stem directly from their day-to-day experiences engaging the challenges at hand. Achieving the transition requires both political leadership and practical implementation on an everyday level.

The transition towards climate neutrality faces many challenges far beyond governance structures: Physical realities, economic and financial barriers, and external factors beyond a city's control all play a role. The [NetZeroCities portal](#) and consortium aim to support cities across these challenges, but we believe that setting up a true multi-actor Transition Team as a coalition for change can be an important part of resolving them. This document is complementary to materials on the NetZeroCities portal, in particular the Climate Transition Map, which we refer to in *Orchestration in Action* below.

We also acknowledge that the suggestions made in this document may raise many more questions from cities who are at different stages of their journey. No single written document can encompass the realities of such a diverse group of cities. The next step is to start using this document as a practical guide and evolve it over time through the interactions with City Advisors, other cities and the resources offered through NZC (on the NZC portal or in interactions with NZC team...).





Intent of the Playbook

Who Is This Playbook For?

This playbook is intended for:

- NetZeroCities' **Point(s) of Contacts in cities**, as they join the Mission and prepare ground for the intense efforts of their Climate City Contract process and reaching climate neutrality. This playbook will guide them through one of the first steps of the journey: Setting up the **Transition Team** and outlining concrete ideas to develop their city's ability to orchestrate a just transition.
- Members of cities' Transition Team, as this Team will form and start working in the following months. This playbook will accompany the Team in its start-up phase.

What Is the Intent of This Playbook?

Learning from what some cities are already doing, this playbook highlights some core principles of a **Transition Team**. We envision the Transition Teams to perform the crucial function of orchestrating local actors and stakeholders throughout the transition to climate neutrality. Whereas many cities have elements of a Transition Team in place already, we also know that others may find it difficult to successfully set up such a team. Based on research and examples from other cities, we offer a range of suggestions on what the Team could look like, acknowledging that **diverse models** are required to match cities' different situations. We provide emerging insights about the **necessary capabilities and skills** of this team and key steps in the **process for setting it up**.

How Should This Playbook Be Used?

As is the case across this Mission, there is **no one size fits all** - but there is much that we can learn together on how we might establish a Transition Team. This also means that this document is designed as a **working document** - as opposed to a finalised report - to be iterated and completed collaboratively with cities embarking on the Mission to climate neutrality. We very much welcome feedback from cities and other actors and stakeholders across society, so that we can evolve and improve this document over time, as the Mission progresses and we continue to learn together. **Please share your thoughts and questions via the NetZeroCities platform or through missioncities@netzerocities.eu.**





PART 1. LEADING THE TRANSITION

(What to do)





What It Takes to Lead a City to Climate Neutrality

The Need for Orchestration (Why it's Key)

Leading a city to climate neutrality by 2030 means spearheading radical changes across multiple sectors and domains of actions - energy, mobility, waste, construction but also procurement, regulation, and public finance, among others. It is unprecedented how much collaboration and coordinated action this type of change requires. It is the real challenge at the heart of the transition to climate neutrality.

For city governments to collaborate with local actors to accelerate these transformations, and thus decarbonisation, it helps to have a confident and highly skilled group to **orchestrate** the process. We call this kind of group a Transition Team. In This is not One-Size-Fits-All below, we give some examples.

Cities that have already developed this type of group have realised that to accelerate change, they need a "neutral" intermediary (for example a local university, dedicated agency or a transition lab) to coordinate actors and actions. This intermediary can take the lead without compromising trust between local actors in diverse sectors. A group that helps build a long-term financing and governance model for decarbonisation at scale and at speed.

There are multiple benefits to the intermediary approach:

- It creates a **momentum and direction** for work, fosters trust and addresses communication problems between actors.
- It allows cities to formulate **cross-sectoral goals**, understand root causes better and tackle complex emission challenges across value-chains and sectors, realising co-benefits and increasing coherence between sectors.
- It enables cities to develop strategies and projects that **involve the knowledge, skills and perspectives of different disciplines and actors** from the civil and private sector.
- It helps cities with limited budgets and capacities to **implement their goals more efficiently** by joining resources and investing strategically.

In some cities, there are already people, groups or organisations that play at least part of this role. In others, there is a need to establish and develop this strong orchestration capability with a dedicated team. This playbook aims to assist cities in setting up this Team (or to set up the Team for achieving the Mission's goal where such a Team already exists) to orchestrate action for the Mission. We will refer to this group of people as the **Transition Team**, though of course in many local contexts other terminology may be used.





Leading a Transition Is Not Project Management

While the Transition Team's role will involve many tasks traditionally associated with project management, such as project and operations planning or coordination, there are at least four critical aspects in which its role differs from this business-as-usual practice.

Process focus instead of project focus: Our context of transition is marked by uncertainty including constant rapid changes, stemming from the interconnectedness and complexity of the challenge we face. Ever emerging needs and opportunities make it necessary to move beyond linear planning towards more flexible, evolving and adaptive processes.

Portfolio approach instead of project approach: The transition to climate neutrality requires overcoming multiple interconnected challenges, from behavioural change to renewable energy generation to regulatory innovation. To address these challenges, the Transition Team's approach aims to connect existing and new climate actions (policies, regulatory and organisational changes, programmes, projects, investments) and thereby create what we call portfolios of coordinated actions. The portfolio approach is dynamic (it's not just 'a list of projects') and deliberately looks to involve multiple actors, and to unlock synergy and co-benefits between actions and across sectors.

Network governance instead of traditional governance:

The Transition Team needs to take a supportive, facilitator role, building capacity across the local ecosystem of public, private and civic actors so that they can (co-)develop climate actions and co-implement them. This is not a traditional leadership role with top-down authority over a group of subordinate actors; the challenge here requires an added level of trust, alignment and openness.

Transition Management Instead of Project Management

The transition towards climate neutrality, with accelerated speed and coordinated actions, will need more than project management. Reflexive learning - an educational route of guiding people through the rapid changes, risks, and uncertainties - can for example be of great use. Through reflexive learning a high number of actors can share and learn from progress and experience across the portfolio in order to iterate, adapt and evolve when the way forward is unclear. A long-term orientation, focusing on the shared overarching Mission, provides a common framework and direction while allowing flexibility to respond to uncertainty and learning. Participatory, transdisciplinary approaches bring multiple perspectives, needs, capabilities and resources across multiple actors and stakeholders, and levels of government, together.





This Is Not One-Size-Fits-All

There is no one set model to establish a Transition Team. The exact form, members and specific responsibilities will vary city by city, but it is essential that the team is in a position to enable rapid, focused action by the local ecosystem in the long term, beyond the support of the NetZeroCities. This means that a Transition Team **sits at the heart of the coalition of actors they orchestrate, closely connected to the city government.** It also requires tools to understand the diverse local ecosystem, and such tools will be made available via the NetZeroCities portal.

The exact organisational form of a Transition Team will vary city by city. It is a highly-contextual, local choice on which model is best. To guide this choice, we offer several examples below of what a Transition Team could look like - although this is by no means an exhaustive list.

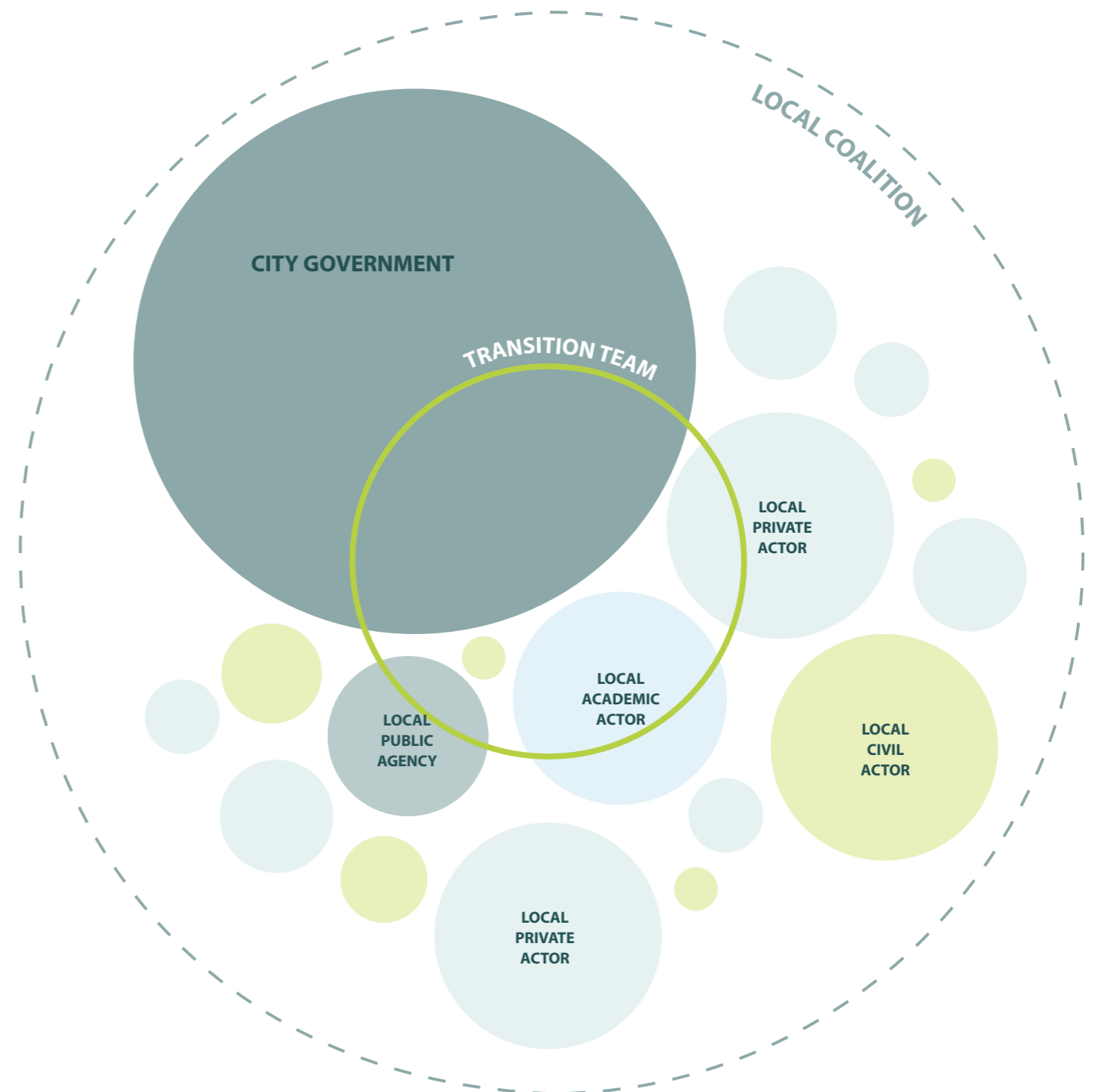


Figure 1. Illustrative Transition team set-up.





MODEL A 'Mission Groups'

Overview

A Mission Group is a collaborative governance structure based around a specific mission, i.e., a challenge such as reaching climate neutrality by 2030. It involves the city government, industry, academia, other actors and sometimes national government departments. Members of these groups commit some time and are supported by a core Mission Team from within the city government. Members of these groups commit some time and are supported by a core Mission team from within the city government.

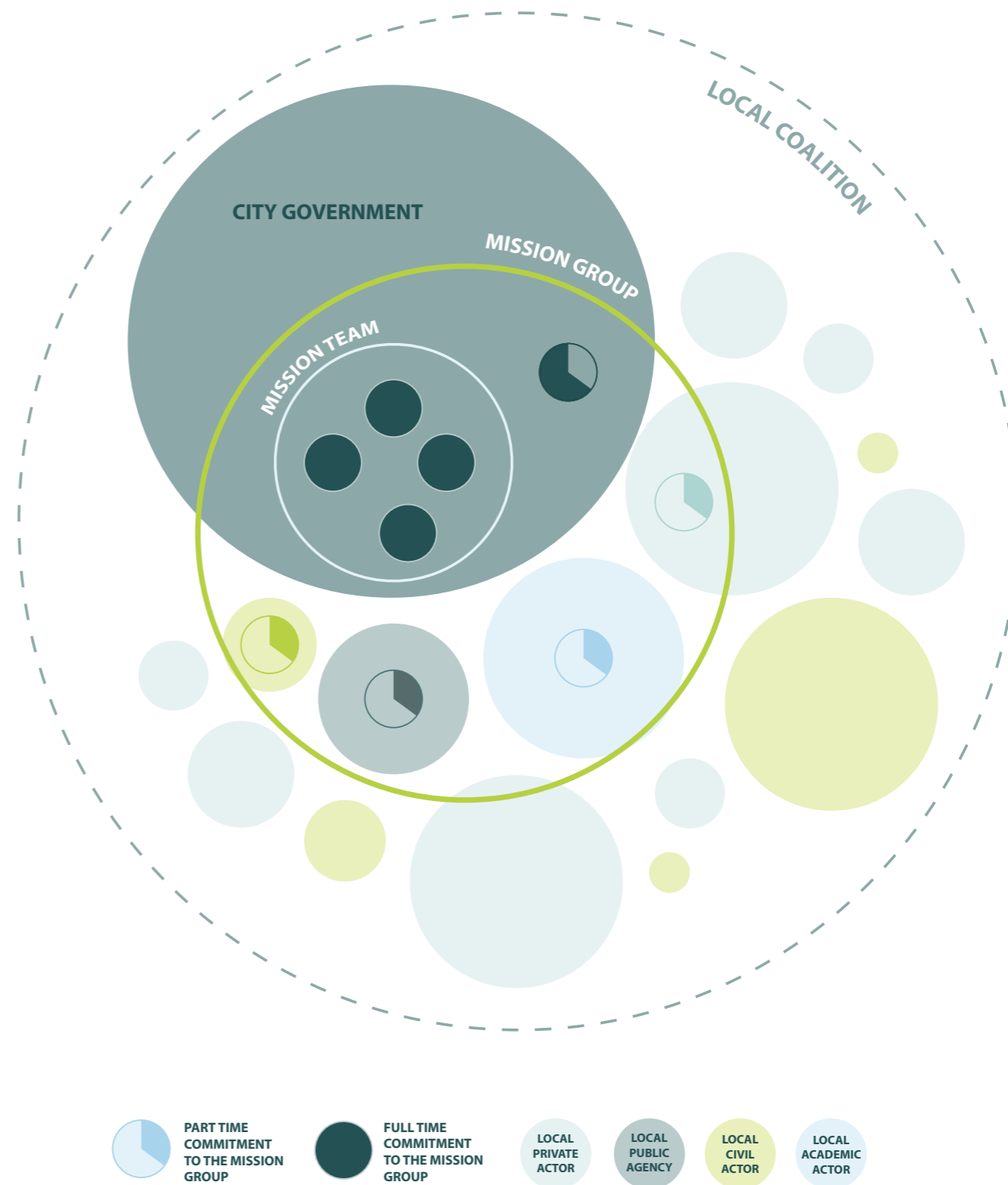


Figure 2. Illustrative example of a Mission group model of Transition team based on Manchester's Clean Growth Mission team.





Possible benefits:

- The core Mission Team within the city government is already funded.
- The team is well placed to access potential city government resources.
- The Mission Group can draw on city services, such as waste management.
- The city brand boosts engagement.
- The Mission Group has the legitimacy to incorporate other government scales.
- Learnings from previous climate initiatives can be integrated.

Possible risks:

- Members might not be able to dedicate much time.
- These institutions might be rigid in how they work with the coalition: they are bounded both in terms of their network and their scope and understanding.
- It may be difficult to access more junior external analytical support (e.g., people to do system mapping, data analysis) as attendees tend to have senior strategic roles. Both high-level mandate and support as well as hands-on commitment and capacity are needed.

Examples: Manchester Clean Growth Mission (UK), Camden Renewal Commission in London (UK), Clyde Mission in Glasgow (SC)





MODEL B

The external organisation or spin-out

Overview

A 'third party' organisation can be responsible for orchestrating the local transition to climate neutrality. The orchestration role is neither in the city government nor in any of the other local actors but in a new dedicated organisation with strong connection to these other actors. Team members are full time employees of this organisation. Some additional team members may be drawn out of the coalition of actors, on a permanent basis, or on secondment, but a permanent and autonomous team always remains.

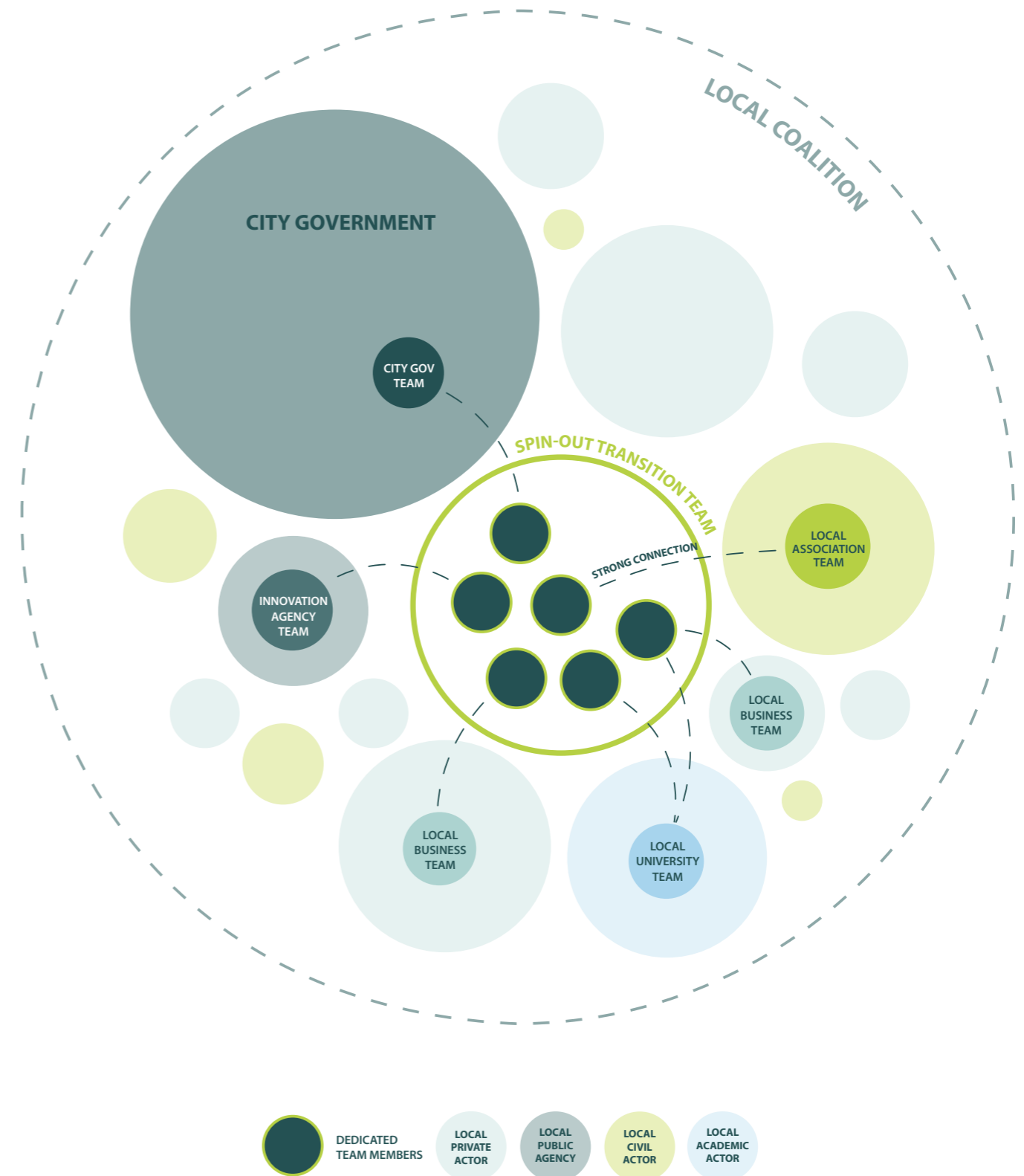


Figure 3. Illustrative example of spin-out model for a Transition team, based on Helsinki's Smart & Clean foundation.





Possible benefits:

- A neutral role enhances trust among actors.
- As the spin out model is rooted in the willingness of local actors to come together (and co-fund) a local coalition, it should have a higher buy-in from a diverse actors from the outset.
- The team has agency to organise its work, and the flexibility to add relevant expertise and capabilities.

Possible risks:

- It may not have a clear political mandate or legitimacy.
- It needs to maintain a strong relationship with the local authority.
- Funding might be challenging to find.

Examples: Smart & Clean in Helsinki (FI), ProjectZERO in Sonderborg (DK) (see also here), Leuven 2030 in Leuven (BE), Green Ribbon Commission in Boston (USA)

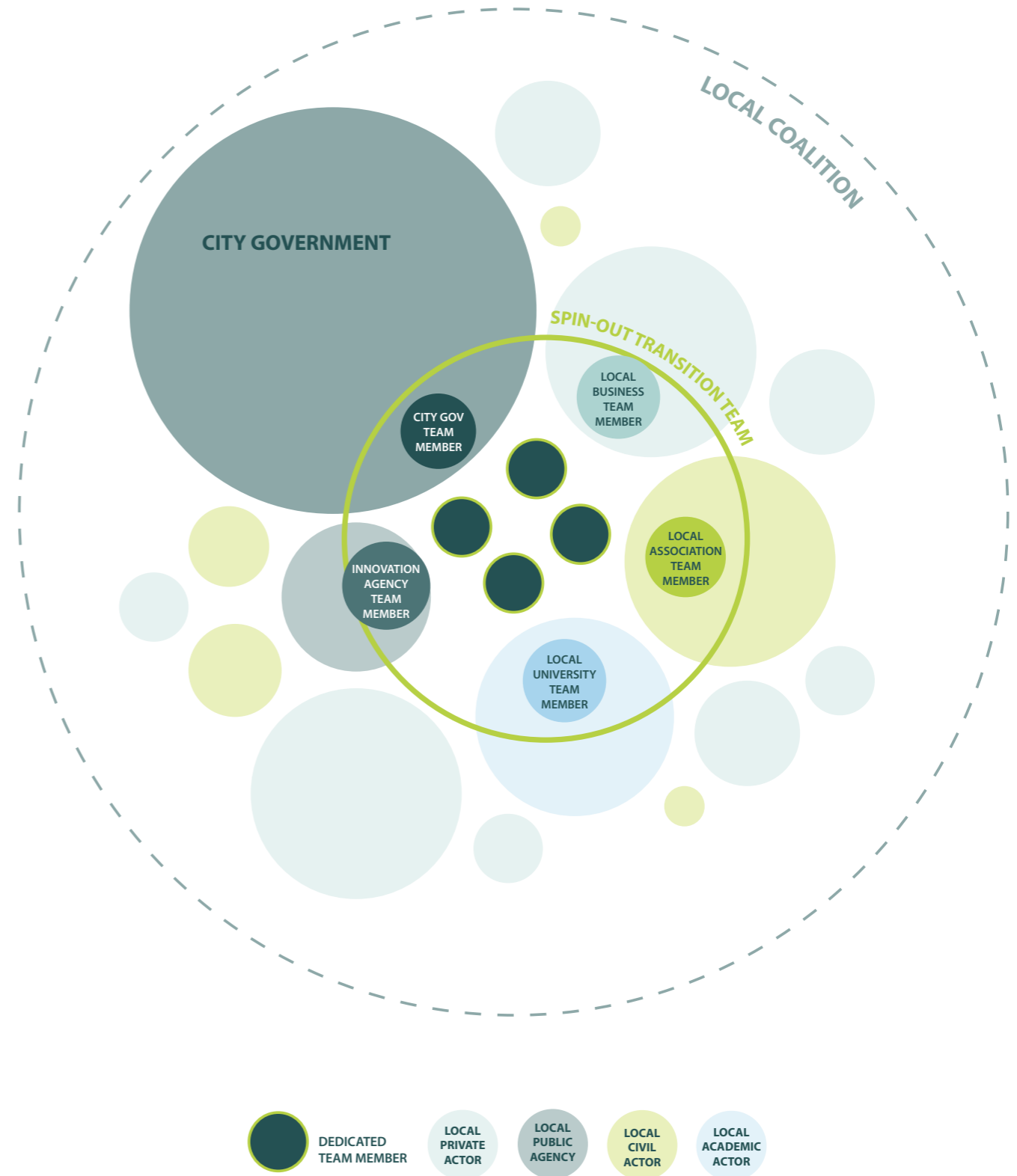


Figure 4. Illustrative example of spin-out model for a Transition team, based on Leuven's Leuven2030, with additional team members from willing local actors.





MODEL C

Networked partnership

Overview

The Transition Team can be the result of a network partnership created with willing, local actors. No independent organisation is created in this model, but a team emerges from a network of core actors. These local actors each make a few individuals available for the orchestration of the coalition.

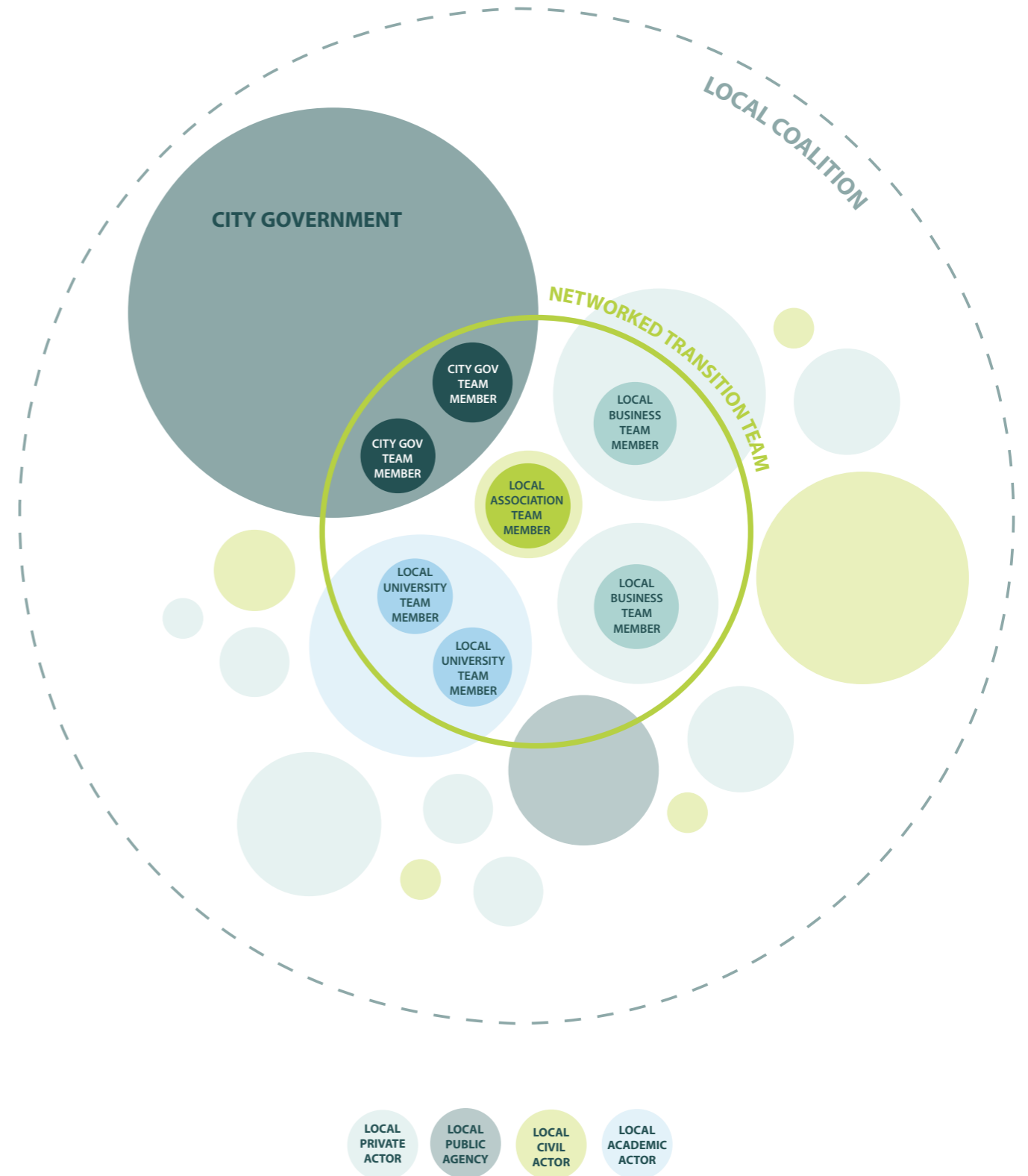


Figure 5. Illustrative example of a network partnership model for a Transition team, based on Madrid Deep Demonstration.





Possible benefits:

- Leadership is distributed between different members of the partnership, meaning resources and capabilities can complement each other.
- Broad networks across multiple actors can build societal mandate that support growing the ambition levels of elected politicians.
- The time invested in sense-making and relationship-building can establish the foundations of trust and interconnection necessary to foster increasingly systemic actions and experimentation.

Possible risks:

- Alignment and sense-making between the organisations taking part in the partnership can be time-consuming.
- Transformative collaboration requires resources and time to build trustful relationships between partners.
- It may not be resilient - it requires long term funding and high engagement from the city government and other organisations to survive in the long term. However, multiple sources of funding may hedge against risk and enable greater resilience.

Examples: Examples: Deep Demonstration on Healthy Clean Cities in Madrid 2019-2020 (ES)





Orchestration in Action

A Transition Team creates a favourable context to justly and collaboratively drive emissions down to zero and achieve co-benefits such as better quality of life, job creation or increased community resilience. For this Team, orchestrating the local effort for decarbonisation means (1) activating an inclusive ecosystem for change, (2) building a strong mandate, (3) understanding the systems, (4) co-create a portfolio, (5) taking action, (6) learning and reflecting and (7) making it the new normal (see figure 6. Climate Transition Map and the [portal](#), which includes more details on each step).

All these aspects of the transition are **continuous**, rather than **sequential**. They are interconnected practices requiring ongoing attention. The Team's responsibility isn't to make or implement decisions. Its role is to **support** and **enable** the local ecosystem of actors - including those with political decision-making power, financing capacity and implementing actors.

While the specifics will vary depending on the particular context of each city, the following paragraphs describe, in practice, the envisioned involvement of the Transition Team in the Climate Transition Map.

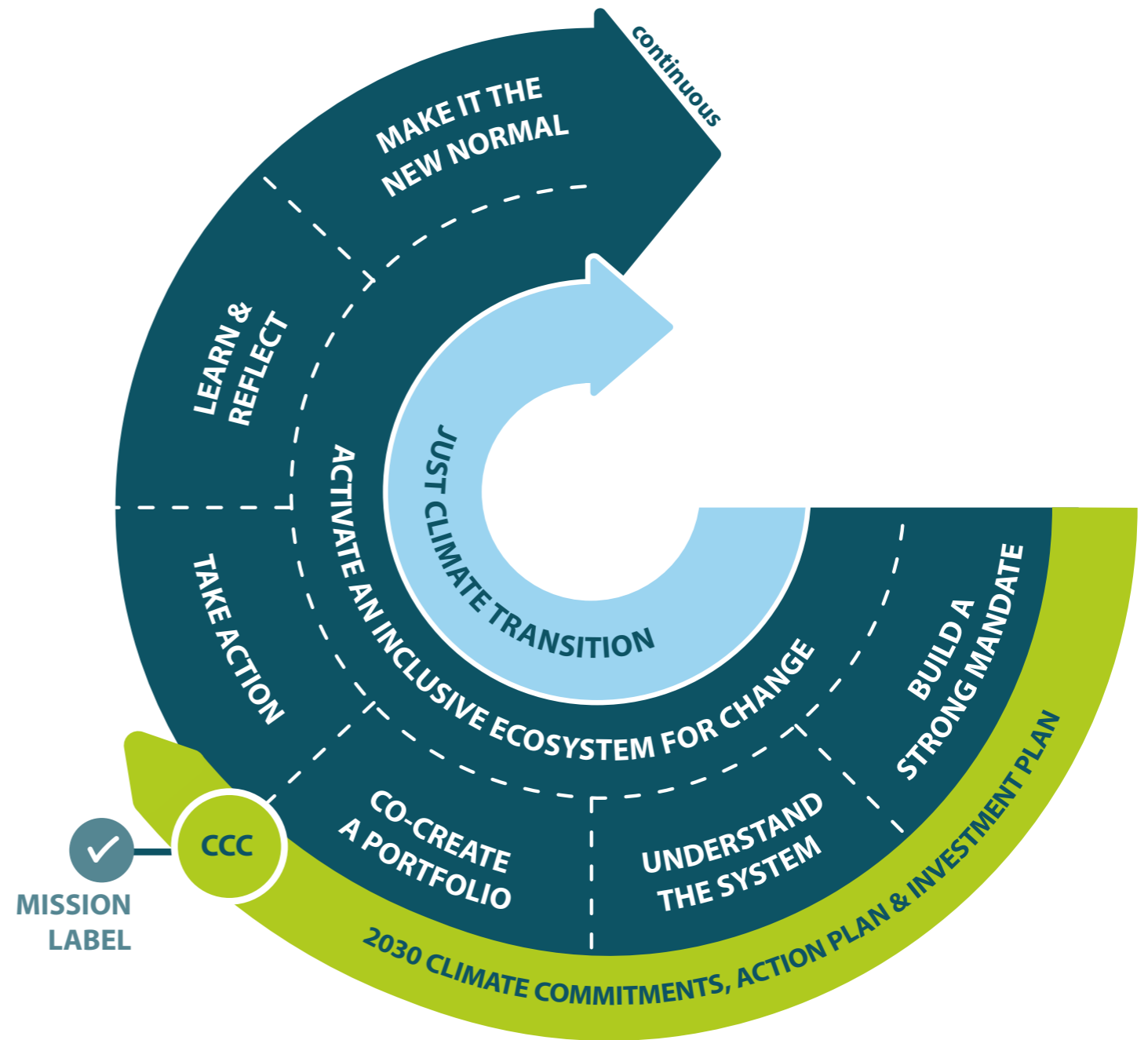


Figure 6. Climate Transition Map





Building a Strong Mandate

- **...within city government**

The Transition Team is deeply connected with the municipal government, with strong relationships at a senior strategic level and at an operational level. With such connections, it supports internal city government teams to strengthen and build upon their mandate for strong climate action.

- **...within the local ecosystem**

The Transition Team helps understand the local ecosystem for change, develops and champions new governance models that build legitimacy with other sectors, facilitates dialogue consensus-building among actors, and establishes compromises for the collective good.

- **...with the other government levels**

The Transition team acts as a contact point between city ecosystem actors and stakeholders and regional, national, EU stakeholders to concentrate and align political and regulatory needs.

Activating an Inclusive Ecosystem for Change

- **Analysing and mobilising the ecosystem**

The Transition Team deploys its deep understanding of the local context to identify relevant and necessary actors to address challenges and brings them into a coalition for change. This multi actor coalition includes public sector, private sector, civil society and academia, spanning as wide as necessary. In this work it is critical to deeply appreciate that achieving the climate goals will require cities to work with a plurality of innovation ecosystem actors. As mentioned in the Introduction, coordinating with experts from academia, other knowledge institutions and the private sector (both large firms, and innovative small & medium sized enterprises) is key, but so is working with neighbourhood groups, cooperatives, and civic networks, and other members of civil society. A document on why and how to ensure active participation from will be available on the portal soon. The Transition Team plays a key role in developing this ecosystem over time. It starts with an initial group of willing actors which is later expanded as the shared understanding of the city's pathway to climate neutrality develops. Connecting and empowering current and new change makers in a distributed system contributes to the resilience of the movement reducing dependence on individual change makers. This requires the Transition Team to create an inclusive setting in which multiple actors can contribute their perspectives, be heard, and overcome issues. In a frequently polarised society, the quality of engagements by the Transition Team is of great importance.





- **Build a shared vision**

The Transition Team creates the space for new narrative(s) to emerge, validating high ambitions, flagging potential risks and understanding the power balance of the actors involved. It does this by facilitating participatory futures thinking and imagining to shift or broaden what is seen as possible in the ecosystem.

Such a narrative is crucial to agree on a vision and a common language that creates a shared direction among local actors.

The Team works on the translation of this co-created vision into a public narrative for action, building up its tangibility and evolving it over time.

- **Cultivating and nurture collaboration**

The Transition Team works to build and maintain trust and strengthen relationships between actors in the ecosystem. It holds and curates the space in which actors and stakeholders interact and collaborate in a way that aims to foster a culture of shared, distributed leadership across the ecosystem.

It facilitates proximity to people, particularly those whose experience, imagination and understanding of problems differs from those most commonly involved in decision making. This proximity ensures that the transition involves meaningful collaboration resulting in the input and buy-in necessary for positive and sustained impact.

- **Building the ecosystem's capability to act**

The Transition Team supports the development of new individual and organisational capabilities for collaborative action, by helping actors and stakeholders learn from and reflect on their work together.

- **Stewarding the shared vision**

The Transition Team constantly works on the alignment of actors and stakeholders, and the alignment of all interventions and investments across the ecosystem. While it does not have the authority to coordinate the actions of all actors and stakeholders beyond the city's core portfolio, it facilitates necessary relationships and interactions to guarantee overall coherence. It realigns relationships and reevaluates trajectories for action to stay in line with the goal.





Understanding the System Through...

- **Data**

The Transition Team works with all actors from across the local ecosystem to aggregate information and data to create a shared overview of the scale and scope of change required, both in terms of actions and capital. They also bring together the different perspectives, experiences and lessons of past efforts to make sense of the city's emissions.

- **Connections and relationships**

The Transition Team builds on the intelligence it has gathered to map the various systems at play - technological, institutional, organisational, regulatory, financial, political, social and behavioural - with local actors. The success of this process relies on the Team's ability to ask the questions that reveal the dynamics of the system, including interdependency patterns, power, resource flows, needs, risks, lever opportunities and barriers.

- **Future scenarios**

The Transition Team turns system maps into tools for decision-making by identifying possible entry points in the system for transformation and developing the associated scenarios. Scenarios illustrate how various entry points are plausible avenues for transformation, specifying interdependencies, impact (quantitatively and qualitatively) and funding strategies.

Co-designing Portfolios

- **Exploring actionable pathways**

The Transition Team organises the evaluation of the various scenarios created with insight from actors across the local ecosystem. This helps decision-makers identify what pathways would equitably lead to breakthroughs toward climate neutrality. To do so, the Team pays specific attention to barriers and synergies that may arise, the distribution of potential benefits and risks across local actors and stakeholders, in addition to climate impact and funding options.

- **Connecting intervention across...**

The Transition Team assists in the curation of a comprehensive portfolio of actions selected out of the identified pathways by decision-makers across all relevant actors. It ensures the portfolio focuses on a range of connected interventions across multiple levers of change for a just transition, including policy and regulatory change, investments, new finance instruments and technological or social innovation. The portfolio includes both visible 'early wins' and experiments in emission domains where available solutions (technological, financial, governance...) are currently less clear, meaning that ideas need to be tested to produce additional understanding of what works. The Transition Team ensures the portfolio's ability to test options that can create insights for future decisions.





Take Action:

- **Share portfolio**

The Transition Team contributes to the promotion of the emerging portfolio and of the full ecosystem contributing to its creation, delivery and evolution over time. In doing so, it aims to use the portfolio and ecosystem as attractors for further action and learning, mobilising new actors and investors around the transition.

- **Implement**

Local governments, utilities, large corporate organisations, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and households or community groups, all play a role in the implementation of actions from the portfolio. Having activated an inclusive ecosystem for change, strong connections between actors and stakeholders, and a shared understanding of priorities and complementary actions, enable actions to be taken forward by different actors depending on their mandate and capacity. The Transition Team coordinates this implementation among different organisations and groups. It facilitates opportunities to review actions to identify greater synergies and co-benefits across the city.

In some cases, it might be helpful for the team to link implementation indicators to the city budget to increase commitment and ensure efficient, orchestrated implementation of actions.

- **Track progress**

The Transition Team evaluates with all relevant actors how portfolio actions contribute to the city's achievement of its just climate neutrality goals. It focuses on ongoing, transparent learning, aiming to generate shared insights with both quantitative and qualitative indicators. The aim is not just to see whether individual actions have results, but especially to understand the underlying dynamics and complementary shifts (in policy, regulation, behaviours). Such insights are critical to enable and accelerate the wider transition.

Learn and reflect:

- **Making sense as a group**

The Transition Team facilitates, collects and disseminates learning among actors of the ecosystem and interventions of the portfolio to accelerate knowledge sharing and impact. It participates in exchanges with other cities and their Transition Teams, through national or regional networks.

- **Pivot and adapt**

The Transition Team constantly works on adapting portfolio actions to meet context-specific needs and respond to recent learnings. It reevaluates developments to progressively strengthen the pathway to decarbonisation, and to enable changes in the right direction when goals are at risk of being missed. The team creates a culture in which changing needs and challenges are constantly addressed, discussed and responded to.





Making it the new normal

- **Enabling replication**

The Transition Team organises the collection and aggregation of experiences and data across the ecosystem and portfolio. This is both to strengthen awareness of the need for action and communicate the value created and the co-benefits brought by transforming practices.

- **Formalise**

The Transition Team uses relationships built with actors and stakeholders, such as regional or national networks, to help formalise new practices developed through the portfolio and adapt them to larger and/or different settings. This can mean policy change or establishing new organisational structures.

- **Embed**

The Transition Team diffuses and embeds successful practices developed in the portfolio through professional practice. It supports changes in organisational culture and norms.





PART 2. GETTING STARTED

(How to do it)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101036519.



Where to Start?

NetZeroCities will support cities on their journey with tools, case studies and tailored support wherever possible. Cities that are selected as Pilot Cities will also receive funding. In combination with these forms of support, establishing **a local Transition Team**, as described above, where such a function is not already in place, can facilitate a successful journey to climate neutrality.

As described above, the Transition Team will ideally include representatives from both City government and the wider local ecosystem in an organisational model that responds to the specific context of that particular city. The following Step-By-Step: Creating a Transition Team provides general guidance on **how to set up such a team**, focusing on:

- A **process** for how this Team can be established, having the whole ecosystem in mind.
- Key **skills, traits and roles** to consider when selecting members of the Transition Team.

In cities that have established the ambition of reaching climate neutrality a number of civil servants and external partners are already working to achieve this goal. These existing individuals can be a great starting point for the creation of the Transition Team. While it could be difficult for many cities to recruit new team members within a short timeframe, performing a strategic review of existing actors and their roles can help identify potential gaps, informing subsequent additions to the initial team or amendments to the work areas in order to grow a full Transition Team.

Experience shows that the Transition Team set-up may not have a fixed composition and impermeable boundaries - it can have core members, connected members and strategic allies involved in different ways and with different levels of intensity over time. While the team itself may evolve, regular strategic exchange and support across organisations and departments will be the key throughout.





Step-By-Step: Creating a Transition Team

The process of identifying and establishing the Transition Team will vary in each city. In some cities this Team can be anchored inside the city government whereas in others, it may be hosted in an external organisation that has a collaborative relationship with the city government, such as a national mission platform or a local university.

Either way, the City government will need to have a mission-oriented cross-departmental team that initiates, then engages with, the multi-actor Transition Team. In some cities, additional staff may be recruited or may shift its current scope of work to strengthen a city team which already exists. Other cities may have to work within the given frame.

A series of process ingredients to bring together the Transition Team are suggested here. Of course putting this into practice will be slightly different in every city in order to adapt to diverse realities. However, common steps are likely to involve:

a) Ecosystem Mapping and Analysis

- A small strategic team made up of people from different departments with various levels of responsibility convenes to conduct an initial **analysis of the city ecosystem**. This entails mapping city assets, power dynamics and key sectors - including civic groups, Non-Governmental Organisations and individuals - who have an impact (positive or negative) on the city's transition towards climate neutrality. This initial map should be complemented and further refined with insight from other actors and stakeholders across the local ecosystem.
- Once the actor and stakeholder map is drafted identifying important actors and stakeholders, both inside and outside of the city administration, as well as other aspects such as relationships, power dynamics and (current and future) political considerations, the map is analysed and shared with other key individuals to include their input and additional perspectives.





Questions that might be used to guide this analysis:

- What are the root causes blocking progress towards climate neutrality at the moment?
- Which actors hold the most power (eg.: budget, staff and decision-making power inside and outside city administration) to change these root causes ?
- How is climate neutrality planning integrated into the overarching urban planning of the city, at the moment? What does that tell you about the strategy that you need to adopt?
- How do you need to set up your work from the outset (and with whom) in order to scale up impact as quickly as possible while ensuring long term vision and impact?
- Are there individuals that you might want to add to the conversation early in order to ensure their support later?
- Which actors experience the urgency of change and/or injustices in the process or absence of change, but are usually not included in decision making processes?





b) Call for Transition Team Members

- Based on the completed mapping and analysis process, a **list of key departments and organisations** is developed. The inclusion of additional perspectives and input from diverse actors, in combination with a thorough mapping and analysis process (step 1), enriches, improves and strengthens the selection process.
- A **call for members** to be a part of the Transition Team is launched once the key organisations and departments have been selected. This format aims to attract people who are intrinsically motivated to work towards the climate neutrality of their city, as opposed to people being appointed to perform such functions by others.

c) Transition Team Members Selection

- The next page includes People matter includes examples of key skills, roles and screening criteria that can be used when **reviewing the applications** or expressions of interest that are received from Transition Team candidates.

d) City Contact Person Selection

Once members of the Transition Team have been defined, a strong communicator who is able to build bridges across disci-

plines, departments and organisations is collectively selected as **City Contact Person** to act as contact person between the city and NetZeroCities. The next page includes People matter includes relevant criteria that can be used to make the decision. This City Contact Person could be the same as at the beginning of the process or a new individual. What counts is that every individual is in a position that suits their capabilities best. In this case, a highly communicative, politically savvy individual who can work across disciplines, hierarchies, and organisations is needed.

e) Link with NetZeroCities

- Once the Team and City Contact Person have been determined, contact details are shared with the **City Advisor**. This enables NetZeroCities to send relevant content.

f) Cultivating a Good Team Culture

- Experience has shown that teams that take the time to get to know each other better on a personal level enjoy higher levels of trust, which are likely to lead to more pleasurable and effective work. The next page includes People matter includes general good practices for Transition Teams to cultivate healthy and effective team culture.





People Matter

Individuals and the motivation, skills, and networks that they bring can often be the difference between failure and success. Therefore, finding and engaging the right individuals for a Transition Team is essential. This section provides guidance to identify some of the key skills and functions that might be needed in their Transition Teams.

The first section (A careful balance of skills) covers general skill recommendations for successful teams, based on previous experience from NZC Consortium Partners working in cities, including some key capabilities for individual team members and a balanced team composition. The second (Essential Roles) focuses on traits and roles that may be needed within the Transition Team. Finally, the third (Good Practices for Transition Teams) outlines a series of good practices for the success of the team.

a) A Careful Balance of Skills

Experience in cities that already have elements of such Transition Teams, show it is important for the members of this Team to be **strategically positioned**, to have the **necessary capabilities**, to be **impact-driven**, to have a growth mindset and the **senior (political) support** to work across departments and sectors. Certain **common skills and attributes** will

make it possible for the Transition Team to contribute fully to accelerating change and impact in the city. These include aspects such as being able to work in **interdisciplinary teams**, with **empathy** and **strategic thinking**, for example. Additionally, the **ability to learn** new technical knowledge quickly will make it possible to **connect** specialists from different spheres.

Having completed the ecosystem mapping and analysis, our Point of Contact in cities will have identified what strategic **departments and organisations** they might want to include in their Transition Teams. Members with **local knowledge**, existing **social capital** (embedding in local networks) and an ability to **navigate political systems** can make the Transition Team more influential. Cities also have a strong understanding of what **technical areas** are most pertinent. Based on that, they might want to include representatives with expertise on energy, housing, mobility, built environment or urban planning, green spaces, biodiversity, waste management, finance, participation, climate, public health, economic regeneration and/or innovation, among others.

It is the balance of capabilities, more than the exact individual abilities of particular Team members, that can truly set up the Transition Team for success.





b) Essential Roles

While local context and human resources mean no two Teams will look alike, certain essential traits and roles can enable the orchestration function in any set-up. Inspired by the Design Council's [Beyond Net Zero Systemic Design Framework](#), the following traits - which do not necessarily represent individual positions and may be played by one or multiple individuals in the Team - illustrate key orchestration roles:

- **Leader and Storyteller:**

A person with great storytelling abilities, who can inspire others speaking about what might be possible and why it is important, achieving buy-in from all levels and having the tenacity to persevere and see things through. Someone who is able to keep a long-term vision while demonstrating short-term results, who provides guidance while enabling autonomy and can balance compliance and the need for flexibility to adapt to changing contexts.

- **Connector and Convenor:**

A person with excellent facilitation, marketing and communication skills who has strong, local relationships. Someone who is able to create spaces for diverse people to come together and who can contribute to build a bigger movement.

- **System Thinker:**

A person who is able to see the connections between different issues and the bigger picture, and who can move across silos and between different scales, from the micro to the macro. Someone who has transdisciplinary investigation capabilities and strives to understand power dynamics, complexity and why things work the way they do - or why they don't.

- **Operation Specialist and Maker:**

A person who has the necessary drive and technical and creative skills to get to work and make things happen. Someone who can put the power of design, innovation and data tools into action.





The following questions may be used when identifying these Transition Team members:

- Does the individual have adequate time to work on the decarbonisation of the city?
- Are they motivated and interested in learning?
- Do they bring the right capabilities (technical, soft and orchestration capabilities)?
- Are they strategically positioned? Do they have a sufficient level of influence on both political and technical municipal practitioners and/or the ability to build these relationships?
- Do they have the mandate and freedom to work across departments, inside and outside of the city?
- Do these individuals together create a functioning team that covers a wide range of technical skills and most or all of the orchestration roles?





The previous archetypes illustrate relevant roles that will be required throughout the orchestration function. Additionally, during the initial stages of the Transition Team and for the duration of the NetZeroCities project, Transition Teams will need an additional role: the City Contact Person.

- **City Contact Person**

The City Contact Person will be the primary contact person for NetZeroCities and may lead the orchestration locally or play some of the other parts described above. When identifying the members of the Transition Team, cities may want to select an individual who is good at working in interdisciplinary teams and has excellent communication and relationship building abilities to act as City Contact Person.

Some of the questions to guide the selection of the City Contact Person might include:



The following questions may be used when identifying this Contact Person

- Does the person have adequate time (ideally full-time) to work on NetZeroCities?
- Do they have stable working conditions to strategically address both short and mid-term goals?
- Do they have strong motivation to drive the Transition Team, and senior support to do so?
- Is the person capable of demonstrating short-term results while maintaining a future-oriented vision?
- Is the person an excellent communicator and able to work across disciplines, hierarchies and organisations?
- Is the person very good at building and maintaining good and strong relationships and creating spaces where people from different backgrounds can come together?





c) Good Practices for Transition Teams

In practice, general recommendations for functioning teams might include:

- **Ensuring Strong Ownership and Distributed Leadership:**

Functioning teams enjoy strong senior and/or political support, which gives them the legitimacy to act. Responsibility and ownership are distributed but there is at least one (ideally more!) individual(s) that continuously push(es) things forward.

- **Cultivating Good Communication and a Collaborative Team Culture:**

Team building activities and cultivating good communication practices, including space for candid conversations, lead to better collaboration and a more effective and resilient Transition Team.

- **Including Diverse Team Members:**

Team members represent a diversity of intersectional experiences, backgrounds and perspectives. These span across different levels of seniority, disciplines, age groups and genders, and are able to bridge silos and work as a united group.

- **Fostering a Shared Sense of Purpose:**

The work, partnerships and process are connected by a shared purpose. This purpose gives meaning to projects, motivates collaboration with particular individuals and organisations and determines the particular ways in which processes are carried out. The shared purpose is reflected in both the details and agreements of actions and in the way relationships are developed and cared for.

- **Cultivating Impact Networks:**

Team members dedicate time and energy to cultivate networks of genuine, complementary relationships. These networks link transdisciplinary capabilities and resources from across the city to act in unison toward the shared purpose. They are geared towards action and capable of integrating the skills, people, practices and processes necessary to activate an inclusive ecosystem for a just transition.





Going Forward

The Transition Team, even though it is a transition governance structure whose existence in scope and time goes beyond NetZeroCities, will be interacting in the coming months with the Cities Mission platform. The team in general, and the City Contact Person more likely, will thus engage with a few different NetZeroCities actors who will accompany them on their transition:

- **City Advisors:** they provide a key strategic link to the NetZeroCities platform as well as front-line support to the Transition Team. They animate collaborative working between cities and help Transition Teams apply tools and services.
- **NZC Experts:** with expertise in Systems Innovation, Financial Innovation, Citizen Engagement, Social Innovation and Technical Innovation, they work with cities' Transition Team to provide input as required in their areas of expertise. They offer Transition Teams learning opportunities with specifically created support resources, tools and events.

The relationships between these actors are two ways; ongoing communication and collaboration is key. The following matrix outlines the exchange of information, knowledge and experience that this communication and collaboration may entail.

Matrix of relationships

↓ PROVIDES TO →	CITY CONTACT PERSON (CITY TRANSITION TEAM)	CITY ADVISOR	NZC PARTNERS
CITY CONTACT PERSON (CITY TRANSITION TEAM)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable link to city stakeholders, specifically city government • Knowledge and experience of local challenges around climate neutrality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable link to city stakeholders, specifically city government • Knowledge and experience of local challenges around climate neutrality
CITY ADVISOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable link to NZC • Consistent follow-up and front line support • Orientation and signposting for resources, tools and expertise • Facilitation of collaborative working with other cities' Transition Teams 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable follow-up of a city's journey towards climate neutrality • Established relationship with the local Transition team • Pre-identification of key local actors and/or challenges
NZC EXPERTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert analysis and co-designed recommendations on Systems Innovation, Financial Innovation, Citizen Engagement, Social Innovation, Technical Innovation • Learning by doing opportunities with appropriate tools and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-demand additional support • Expert-backed resources, tools, methods 	





Closing Remarks

In conclusion, we'd like to emphasise that setting up a Transition Team with individuals from the municipality and the wider ecosystem is a very important part of governance innovation unlocking a broader movement for change. In Autumn 2022 and in 2023, much of the work of NetZeroCities will focus on supporting, building and expanding this Team. This will range from tailored support through the City Advisors, to peer learning and capabilities building in a range of domains. An honest and credible assessment of where each city feels they are at, and what structural barriers and underlying issues they face, is a key foundation for this work.

We wish you all the best for setting up, expanding and improving your Transition Team. Please do provide feedback on your learning and to suggest additional resources that could be useful. You can share your thoughts and insights via the NetZeroCities platform or through missioncities@netzerocities.eu.





Glossary

NB a note to the reader: This Glossary explains what we mean with certain terms. If you feel there are other concepts that need 'unpacking' or explaining in a glossary, please let us know via missioncities@netzerocities.eu - thank you

- **Actors:** All individuals and organisations acting purposefully towards climate neutrality, whether from the public, private, civic or academic sector or e.g. the media, and also including citizens, neighbourhood groups and households.
- **Breakthrough:** A combination of technical solutions, policies and regulations, practices, ways of working, and financing mechanisms through which a system (or sub-system) crosses a tipping point, causing rapid and self-sustaining change (eg. car sales in Norway crossed the tipping point from 'petrol by default' to 'electric by default')
- **Climate City Contract:** A suite of strategic, planning and investment documents and plans that apply an innovative governance and systems approach to enable and speed up the transition towards climate neutrality. See more [here](#).
- **Climate Transition Map:** In order to visualise the climate transition that many cities will need to undergo, using a [systemic approach](#), we have developed a [Climate Transition Map](#). Each city will start their journey at different points of this Map, and the phases are not linear, but we believe that the fundamentals in this Map will hold true. The key sections are (1) activating an inclusive ecosystem for change, (2) building a strong mandate, (3) understanding the systems, (4) co-create a portfolio, (5) taking action, (6) learning and reflecting and (7) making it the new normal.
- **Co-benefits:** The positive effects that a policy or measure aimed at one objective might have on other objectives, irrespective of the net effect on overall social welfare. (definition of IPCC, 2018)
- **Developments:** Wider developments that are not always within a city's control such as macro-economic trends.
- **Innovation:** When referring to innovation in this document, we mean innovation in a wide sense; as acts to put into practice novel change that generates different ways for things to be done across one or more domains. This goes beyond technological innovation, to also include governance innovation, social innovation, financial innovation etc.
- **Innovation Ecosystem / Local ecosystem:** We refer to the local ecosystem when speaking of the relevant actors within a city working towards a just climate transition; if they are [actively connected](#) and collaborating or operating synergistically they operate as a purpose-oriented ecosystem. This term is related to the term 'innovation ecosystem', which often refers to innovation partners in a city. These partners might work directly with the municipality. Alternatively, they may have stronger or weaker relations, in - for example - particular economic sectors. Often the 'innovation ecosystem' is used to refer to academia, other knowledge institutions, and the private sector in addition to parts of the public sector working on innovation and economic development activities. The term ['triple helix'](#) is sometimes used to describe this scenario. Yet, when we speak about the local ecosystem in the context of the climate transition, we purposefully mean this to also include civil society: citizens, neighbourhood groups and households, NGOs or emerging initiatives like cooperatives or social innovators. This is sometimes referred to as the ['quadruple helix'](#) to emphasise this addition of civil society as part of the Innovation Ecosystem and a valuable innovation partner. The term [Transition Arena](#) is also sometimes used to refer to the ecosystem of all actors involved in a just climate neutrality transition.
- **Mission Label:** A Mission label will be awarded to the selected cities that have signed a Climate City Contract, recognising the quality and feasibility of their commitments under the contract. This label will facilitate the creation of targeted funding opportunities in EU funding programmes by making explicit reference to the label in their award procedures (calls for proposals, prizes etc.). For example, this could give cities participating in the Mission additional 'points' in the award criteria under the evaluation process. The Mission label will also offer an opportunity for regions and Member States (and other public actors) to support highly visible activities on climate neutrality to help carry forward their overall efforts to meet European Green Deal targets. More information [here](#).





- **Pilots:** One or more domains, one or more levers and activities, including a combination of technical solutions, policies and regulations, practices, ways of working, and financing mechanisms, which aim to find breakthroughs and establish transition pathways. We think in pilots and experiments because complex challenges such as climate change require an approach that suits that.
- **Portfolio:** A dynamic set of complementary climate actions (e.g. policies, regulatory and organisational changes, programmes, projects, investments) that deliberately looks to involve multiple actors, and to unlock synergies and co-benefits to reach maximum impact.
- **Stakeholders:** A person, group, organisation or system that affects or can be affected by the climate actions of a city; this is a wider group than 'actors'.
- **Systems innovation:** An innovation methodology which recognises that political, economic and social systems are interconnected, and deploys coherent and directional portfolios of projects or experiments across a range of levers (policy, regulation, finance, markets, governance, mindsets, technology). [Also see here](#)
- **Transition Team:** A Team, which brings the municipality and the ecosystem of multiple actors across society together to accelerate the transition towards climate neutrality. The Team might start as "internal" team but expands over time to also include "external" individuals. Only Transition Teams that spans across the ecosystem have a chance of reaching climate neutrality by 2030.





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