



Report to IEC

Monday, February 9, 2026

C40 / UNEP Travel Report

Dear Chair and Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

In October and November 2025, I attended three events tied to the United Nations Environment Programme's Generation Restoration in São Paulo, Brazil, the C40 World Mayors Summit and the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities Mayors Round Table and Urban Nature Forum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as the Mayor's designate. I also visited Rio de Janeiro's Operations Centre to learn how they have dramatically improved their city's response to a wide range of emergencies.

As part of my participation, I attended sessions, activities and site visits organized by UNEP, ICLEI, C40, Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) and the World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC), participated on a panel showcasing Toronto as a Generation Restoration Role Model City, and engaged with counterparts from across the globe on topics related to tackling the climate crisis, the implementation of nature-based solutions in an urban setting, and creating green and thriving neighbourhoods.

A report of these engagements, the programs for the Workshop, Summit and Forum, as well as the City of Toronto's Certificate of Recognition as a Role Model City in the United Nations Environment Program's Generation Restoration are attached to this letter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. City Council receive the report from Councillor Dianne Saxe in Attachment 1 for information.

Attachments

Attachment 1 — Report from the Mayor's Designate to UNEP's Generation Restoration International Workshop and C40 World Mayors Summit

Attachment 2 — UNEP Generation Restoration International Workshop Program

Attachment 3 — UNEP Generation Restoration Certificate of Recognition

Attachment 4 — C40 World Mayors Summit Program

Attachment 5 – Urban Nature Forum Agenda

Attachment 6 – Urban Nature Forum Briefing Package

Attachment 1 – Report from Mayor’s Designate to UNEP’s Generation Restoration International Workshop and C40 World Mayors Summit

In July 2023, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) received delegated authority from City Council to pursue a designation as a Role Model City for UNEP’s Generation Restoration project, an initiative within the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030). Throughout the course of the project, Toronto participated as one of 13 global cities that were selected as Model Cities (one of only two Canadian cities, along with Montreal) and 11 Pilot Cities.

From October 31 to November 1, 2025, I attended the **United Nations Environment Programme’s (UNEP) Generation Restoration International Workshop** which took place in São Paulo, Brazil. The workshop served as the final in-person meeting of the current iteration of the Generation Restoration project, which concluded at the end of 2025. The workshop was attended by representatives from Generation Restoration cities, sustainability-driven cities from Brazil and abroad, key stakeholders from São Paulo, and experts from UNEP, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), C40, and other leading organizations.

Toronto is a recognized global leader in ecological restoration, urban forest and ravine management and applying Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to ensure for biodiversity protection and natural area conservation. The Model City designation from UNEP helped bring significant attention to the City’s achievements in restoration while also providing significant leverage to seek out partners among other orders of government and philanthropic donors with the aim of sustaining or scaling up efforts. It also provided an avenue to share the City’s expertise with and learn from the experience of other cities to improve global efforts towards ecological restoration.

As a Role Model City, the City of Toronto demonstrated political will and commitment to the project’s objectives, participated in capacity building workshops and peer-to-peer exchanges with other participating cities and contributed to the development of tools and products to help cities accelerate ecosystem restoration.

While in São Paulo, I participated on a panel titled ‘Towards COP30: Connecting Cities and Nature’ organized by the City of São Paulo in collaboration with UNEP. The discussion explored the significance for the City of Toronto to take on the role of a Role Model City and provided an opportunity to reflect on the lessons it learned from being part of the Generation Restoration international community.

Following the International Workshop, I travelled to Rio de Janeiro to attend, as the Mayor’s designate, the triennial **C40 World Mayors Summit** which took place from November 3 to 5, 2025. The Summit brought together Mayors and senior officials from nearly 100 C40 cities, as well as business leaders, philanthropists, investors, academics and civil society to showcase innovative climate action solutions and to demonstrate what is possible through delivery-focused collaboration.

C40 Cities is a global network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities that are united in action to confront the climate crisis. Toronto has been a C40 member since C40's inception in 2005 via former Mayor David Miller. Miller was the C40 Cities Chair from 2008 to 2010 and currently serves as the Managing Director of the C40's Centre for City Climate Policy and Economy. Toronto is recognized as a leader in climate action nationally and globally, with TransformTO, Toronto's Net Zero strategy standing as one of the most ambitious targets in North America.

C40 recognizes that cities of all sizes can be leaders in climate action, and therefore offer three membership categories: Megacity, Innovator, and Observer. The City of Toronto is a recognized "Leadership" city in the Megacity category and has maintained this status since 2008 when the network was first fully established. Leadership standing is granted on an annual basis via review of Toronto's progress towards acting on climate change. As of the end of 2024, Toronto has been recognized by C40 as making satisfactory progress on all five of C40's Leadership Standards: plan, deliver, mainstream, innovate, and lead.

To date, City staff have been engaged across the C40 Workstreams which include adaptation and water, air quality, energy and buildings, food systems, transportation, urban planning and waste management through participation in networks, accelerators, programmes, forums, and working groups, among others.

As part of the Summit, I attended sessions on various topics, including energy transition in practice, creating green and thriving neighbourhoods, tech and AI for inclusive climate solutions, electrification and transformation of public transit, as well as climate mainstreaming, among others. The Summit provided an opportunity for Toronto representatives to engage in discussions with several international counterparts on approaches to transforming cities to deliver fairer and more resilient communities.

Toronto's international activities, including its participation in C40 and its associated activities, are guided by the International Policy Framework (IPF) adopted by City Council in 2002. The IPF aims to position Toronto as a diverse, economically dynamic, creative and caring global urban centre which contributes to the resolution of urban management issues in cooperation with international partners. It encourages the participation of staff and elected officials as part of formal international associations as well as in discussions and exchanges with cities worldwide. Additionally, the updated International Alliance Program places an emphasis on engagement through membership organizations, or networks, as a forum to build relationships, exchange knowledge and promote City values and priorities.

From November 5-6, 2025, I attended the **Global Platform for Sustainable Cities Mayors Round Table and the Urban Nature Forum and Launch of GEF-8 Sustainable Cities Integrated Program** which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In conjunction with the COP30 Local Leaders Forum of the C40 World Mayors Summit, the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC), led by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC), organized a Mayors Round Table and Urban

Nature Forum, in collaboration with UNEP, C40, ICLEI. The discussions provided a platform for high-level dialogue, peer learning, and technical exchange. It gathered cities and local governments to discuss nature-positive, resilient, and inclusive development, and marked the official launch of the GEF-8 Sustainable Cities Integrated Program (SCIP), a global initiative financed by the to help cities implement integrated solutions across climate, biodiversity, and the circular economy.

The Urban Nature Forum brought mayors, city representatives, and international partners to explore how cities are integrating nature-based solutions into planning, design, and infrastructure. The Forum highlighted innovative strategies and partnerships that connect biodiversity, resilience, and climate action in the urban context. The Sustainable Cities Integrated Program aims to support cities to undertake integrated urban planning, implement policies and invest in nature-positive, climate-resilient, and carbon-neutral urban development and help cities integrate sustainability into planning and policies and engage diverse stakeholders and partners across different sectors and scales. Over the two days, I represented Toronto on two discussion panels, as the Mayor's designate, where I amplified Toronto's experience on the global stage with regard for policies that support climate action and nature-based solutions.

On November 7th, 2025, I visited Rio de Janeiro's Operations and Resilience Centre. This centre was created after the 2010 tragic flooding event that claimed many lives and thousands of homes. I was able to see first-hand the various technology and infrastructure Rio de Janeiro uses to monitor and respond to a wide range of emergencies, which has dramatically improved since the large-scale climate event in 2010.

UNEP's Generation Restoration International Workshop São Paulo, Brazil October 31 to November 1, 2025

Participation

- Attended sessions with representatives from the cities of the Restoration Generation initiative and other cities recognized for their commitment to sustainability, as well as key actors from São Paulo and experts from UNEP, ICLEI, C40 and other leading organizations.
- Topics discussed included the vital role of cities in advancing climate action, biodiversity protection, and sustainable development.
- Event components highlighted the fundamental role of nature conservation and restoration in advancing the climate, socioeconomic, and biodiversity agendas in an integrated and impactful manner.

Bilateral Meetings

- Meeting with municipal government representatives from Montreal, Canada
- Meeting with municipal government representatives from Seattle, USA.

Opportunities & Outcomes

- The Model City designation from UNEP brought significant attention to the City's achievements in restoration while also providing an avenue to share our

expertise and learn from other cities to improve global efforts towards ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation.

- Brief overview of next steps now that program has concluded; opportunity to join Cities with Nature + brief overview of connection between the two initiatives

Next Steps

- Exploring participation on Cities with Nature (actioned through a recommendation coming through Ravine Strategy Implementation Update Report, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, February 25, 2026).

C40 World Mayors Summit 2025

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

November 3 to 5, 2025

Participation

- Attended various sessions in plenary, breakout, and group discussion formats with mayors and mayoral representatives from around the world, with a focus on how cities are driving global climate action to “move from negotiation to action”.
- Themes sessions included:
 - How climate action and social justice can go hand in hand for a fair climate transition
 - Intersection of climate and health, especially in design of neighbourhoods
 - Regenerative and sustainable urban planning – prioritization of urban density, green space and public transport- Climate financing – mobilize resources for climate projects with regional and national stakeholders
 - North American Mayors’ regional convening

Bilateral Meetings

- Cuyahoga County Executive, Chris Ronayne
- Mayor of City of Glasgow, Susan Aitken
- Deputy Mayor of City of Seattle, Jessyn Farrell
- Mayor of City of Sofia, Bulgaria, Vasil Terziev
- Swimmable Cities event, lead by Catherine McKenna
- Various staff from cities

Opportunities & Outcomes

- Opportunities to explore Cool Cities Accelerator as the City just dealt with severe heat waves in 2025, with the hottest summer for the planet.
- Leverage and advance City actions related to Zero Emissions Vehicles, Waste to Resources, etc, through C40 networks
- Explore bike subsidies for youth to delay/decrease reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, similar to Portland’s program

Next Steps

- Explore Cool Cities Network resources to move Toronto’s sustainable climate resilience forward

Urban Nature Forum Rio de Janeiro, Brazil November 5 to 6, 2025

Participation

- As the Mayor’s designate, represented Toronto at the Mayors Round Table, a high-level dialogue among city leaders on urban sustainability and financing, including the official launch of the GEF-8 SCIP.
- Participated as a panelist at the Urban Nature Forum, with presentations and discussion focusing on urban nature policy, planning, and financing to scale solutions for climate resilience and biodiversity.

Bilateral Meetings

- N/A

Opportunities & Outcomes

- Continue engaging with representatives to identify opportunities for exchange of best practices on topics including: nature-based solutions, nature financing and biodiversity promotion in urban design.

Next Steps

- Work with City Clerk’s Office – Strategic Protocol and External Relations to identify future knowledge exchange opportunities through GPSC and other initiatives.