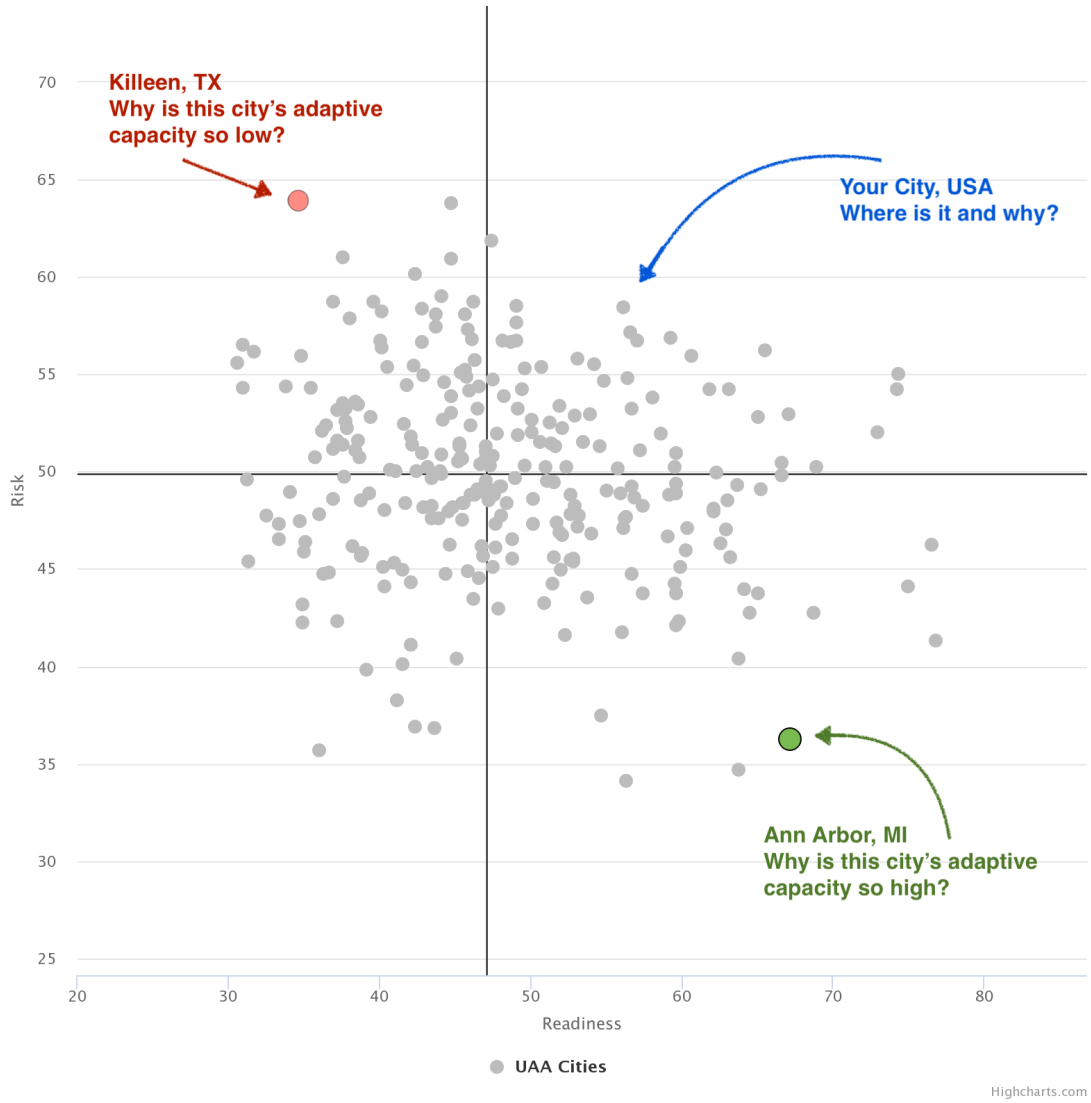
City Juxtaposition in the UAA:
A Quick Orientation Guide for Sustainability Officers

The Urban Adaptation Assessment (UAA) provides, visualizes and links a plethora of data. The City Matrix graphically represents the climate vulnerability of over 270 U.S. cities and provides a quick path for comparisons. To strengthen your orientation in the UAA, explore a few cities that are not your own. We suggest starting with the extremes where similarities and differences will be most evident. Visit the City Matrix to get started. Pick a city, find its priority hazard and find why they're at risk.



Killeen, TX

Based on the data employed by the UAA, this city has the lowest overall risk and readiness score in the UAA. Their profile suggests efforts need to be put towards indicators that should increase adaptive capacity. After scanning through the Potential Future Costs of each hazard, flood poses the most probable and costly risk for Killeen. There is a medium risk of a flood for Killeen, with a projected cost of over $1 million. City managers may consider exploring ways to respond to the negative consequences of a hazard (adaptive capacity) – including reaching out to city managers from a city with higher adaptive capacity to discuss how they achieved this. Considering flood hazards, the UAA utilizes proxies to indicate adaptive capacity such as infrastructural conditions (hospital, water management, etc.). Killeen city managers may consider surveying infrastructural assets and identify opportunities to reduce vulnerability – in infrastructure and in the population – to the anticipated flood hazard. Killeen's low bond worthiness and low civic engagement, as shown in UAA data, may serve as a barrier to raising funds. This suggests an opportunity to start an educational campaign to bring residents into the discussion so the city can put itself in position to divert resources to this expected problem.

Ann Arbor, MI

Based on the data employed by the UAA, this city has one of the highest overall risk and readiness scores in the cities represented. After scanning through the Potential Future Costs of each hazard, flood also poses the most probable and costly risk for Ann Arbor. Their profile suggests efforts have been put towards indicators that should increase adaptive capacity. There is medium risk of a flood for Ann Arbor, with a projected cost of over $300,000. A combination of high economic, governmental and social readiness with low exposure (buildings, cars and people in flood zones) suggests that if this city wanted to minimize the cost of flood, they have the structural, economic, governmental and social resources to do so.

Your City, USA

After getting to know how the UAA ranks cities through the juxtaposition of city profiles with high and low risk and readiness, find your city. Review the Potential Future Costs data for each of the five hazards and determine which hazard is most probable and costly for your city. What similarities and differences do you see between your city's risk and readiness indicators compared to Killeen, TX and Ann Arbor, MI? For each hazard, which infrastructural assets – and neighborhoods – are most vulnerable in your city for each hazard? Numerous resources to help you explore what and where your city should focus climate adaptation resources are available.