



**Why does everyone think  
cities can save the planet?**



# “The new localism”



Cities are where  
people live



Democratically  
responsive



More pragmatic,  
less ideological



Nimble, less  
bureaucratic



# Limits to the new localism



Spatial  
limits



Fiscal  
limits



Legal  
limits



Competitive  
limits

*The*  
GLOBAL URBAN  
COMPETITIVENESS  
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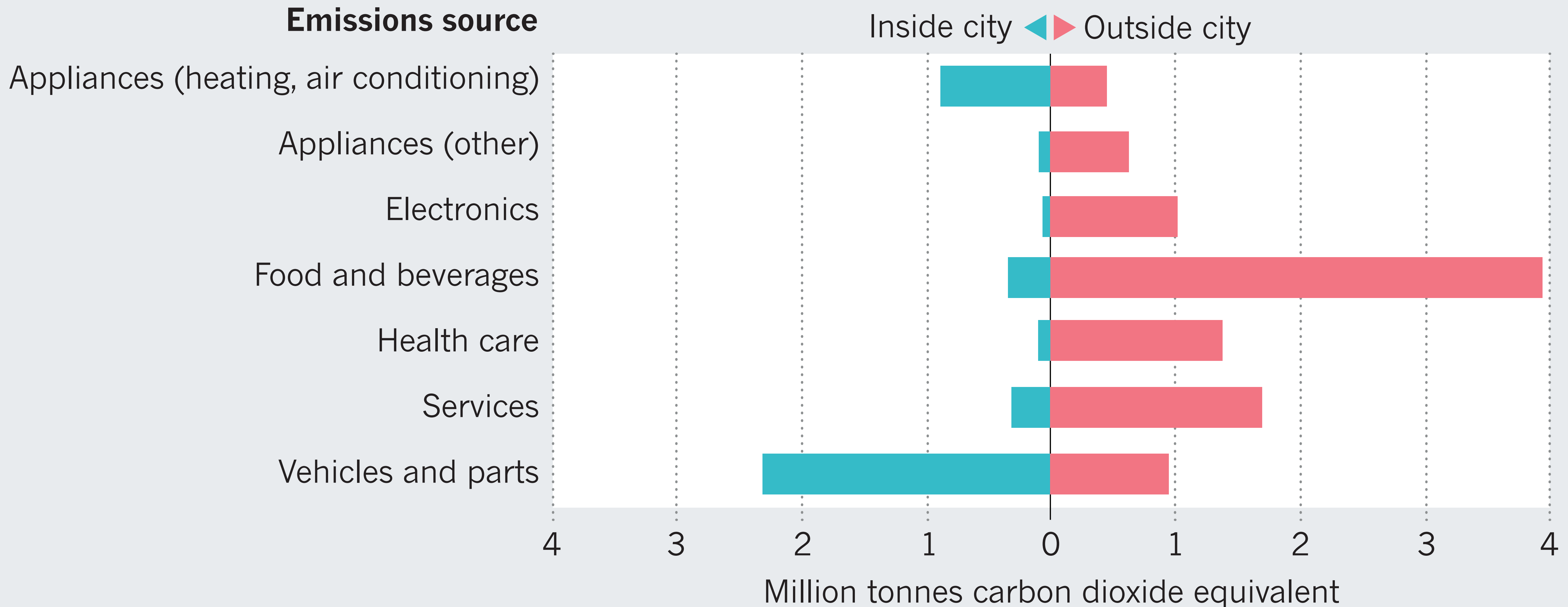


**How should we measure  
urban sustainability?**

**Post-industrial cities'  
low-carbon footprints  
are largely an  
accounting trick.**

# REMOTE IMPACTS

In San Francisco, most of the carbon emissions associated with the consumption of goods by residents, firms and governments in 2008 arose beyond the city's limits — elsewhere in the United States or overseas. Yet municipal sustainability initiatives target only the metropolitan area.





**What are cities' actual  
environmental agendas?**







Disaster preparedness  
(Los Angeles)

Economic development  
(Pittsburgh)



Climate action  
(Honolulu)

Racial equity  
(Boston)



