

SC2: THE WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON STRONG CITIES, STRONG COMMUNITIES



I want to underscore how important I think this effort is, Strong Cities, Strong Communities. It is one that takes tremendous ingenuity, and a determination to cut red tape and do government business better....We are living in a time when there will be limited resources. That is just a fact. Budgets are tight at the state level, at the local level, and at the federal level. And yet the need continues to be enormous. So the question is how to consistently get more bang for our buck.

- President Barack Obama, March 15, 2012



BACKGROUND AND APPROACH FOR SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

President Obama established the White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) in 2012 as an innovative approach for supporting cities experiencing population and job loss, persistent poverty, capacity constraints, and similar challenges in an era of ever dwindling resources. SC2 was officially launched under [Executive Order 13602](#).

Through SC2, 19 federal agencies work together in partnership with committed city leaders as they implement locally driven economic visions.

SC2 does not involve new federal money nor is it a top-down approach. Based on a city's local vision and its request for federal involvement, SC2 seeks to support each city by increasing federal-local collaboration and improving how the federal government invests in and delivers technical assistance to advance locally driven economic development and job creation goals.

SC2 consists of four components and will ultimately work with over 80 cities across the U.S.:

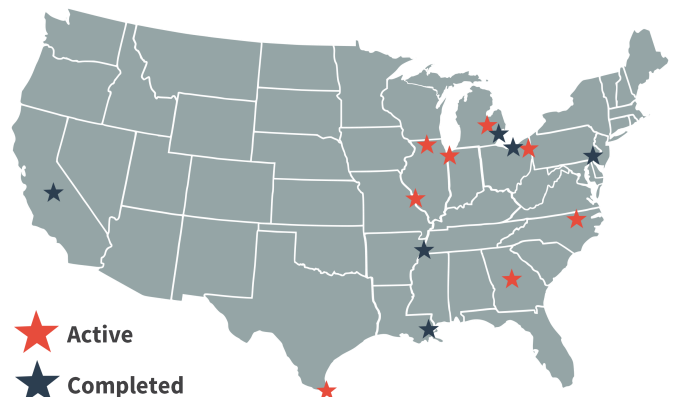
- (1) SC2 Deployed Federal Community Solutions Teams
- (2) SC2 National Resource Network
- (3) SC2 Fellows and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers
- (4) SC2 Economic Visioning Challenge

1. SC2 DEPLOYED FEDERAL COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS TEAMS

In this 14-city pilot, an SC2 federal team lead embeds in a mayor's office for two years and coordinates a federal, interagency team to support the city's vision. The SC2 team functions as a nimble, solutions-oriented partner, cutting through federal red tape, and leveraging resources to advance the city's economic development goals.

SC2 has eight active deployed teams working in: Brownsville, TX; Macon-Bibb County, GA; Flint, MI; Rockford, IL; Gary, IN; Rocky Mount, NC; St. Louis, MO; and Youngstown, OH.

SC2 has completed two-year deployments in six cities: Detroit, MI; Memphis, TN; Chester, PA; New Orleans, LA; Fresno, CA; and Cleveland, OH.



2. SC2 NATIONAL RESOURCE NETWORK

To expand the SC2 model to reach additional cities, the SC2 Council established the SC2 National Resource Network (SC2 NRN).

Overseen by the Council in coordination with a consortium of private sector, non-profit, and academic experts, the SC2 NRN provides:

- On-the-ground technical assistance via a simple rolling application
- Remote technical assistance via the “311 for Cities” feature
- Peer-to-peer networking opportunities for city leaders
- One-stop interagency federal technical assistance clearinghouse
- Curated resource library
- Policy analysis and development

The consortium launched its one-stop resource platform and first-in-the-nation “311 for Cities” service in May 2014, which are available at: www.nationalresourcenetwork.org.

3. SC2 FELLOWS AND AMERICORPS VISTA VOLUNTEERS

In addition to the deployed SC2 teams, the 14 cities in the pilot received complementary capacity from philanthropically-funded fellows and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers.

Thanks to generous funding by the Rockefeller Foundation with management by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, Cleveland State University, and the Virginia Tech Metropolitan Institute, the first six SC2 cities with deployed federal teams received mid-career, non-federal SC2 fellows. As of July 2015, 12 of the 17 fellows have remained in their local positions beyond the two-year term of the fellowship, providing much needed local capacity.

AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers provide additional capacity in the eight active cities with deployed SC2 teams thanks to AmeriCorps waiving the matching requirement for two VISTA volunteers in each SC2-designated city.

4. SC2 ECONOMIC VISIONING CHALLENGE

The SC2 Economic Visioning Challenge (SC2 EVC) is an innovative prize model in which the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) provided funding to three cities: Greensboro, NC; Hartford, CT; and Las Vegas, NV.

These three cities used the funds to create a prize competition for local economic development plans.

More information on these comprehensive economic development plans and the Economic Visioning Challenge can be found at:

<http://www.eda.gov/news/blogs/2015/08/20/SC2-Economic-Visioning-Challenge.htm>

MORE INFO ABOUT SC2

SC2 Website:

<http://www.huduser.org/portal/sc2/home.html>

SC2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) is co-chaired by the White House Domestic Policy Council Director and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The membership of the Council includes the cabinet secretaries and agency directors from the 19 participating federal agencies shown below.

The SC2 Executive Director and Council staff are based at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This staff coordinates with senior-level points of contact at the 19 participating federal agencies to manage approximately 45 federal staff based in the field and manages the SC2 National Resource Network (NRN).

