

FEDERAL CITY COUNCIL

CATALYST

federalcitycouncil.org 2016 Spring/Summer

DC: A Brighter, More Resilient Future

Fostering Better Government
with Better Information

Internships Bring Businesses
and Students Together



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COVER: Photograph by Ted Eytan, Washington DC
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Letter from the CEO and Executive Director

Dear Trustees,

The strength of the Federal City Council (FC2) has always been its enterprising trustees and their ongoing commitment to Washington, DC. That compact has benefited the city in numerous ways yet much work remains. For all its obvious assets, the District is still a city with challenges that demand a thoughtful, measured response from civic leaders and elected officials—a response driven by insightful leadership, fact-based analysis and civic education.

The FC2 initiatives and trustees featured in our Spring/Summer 2016 issue of *Catalyst* magazine are examples of the leadership FC2 regularly displays. These stories convey how the FC2 advances partnerships between individuals, organizations and communities to create meaningful change in the District and the region.

In these pages, you will read about the current state of the Metro—and its future. The Metro plays an important economic and workforce-development role in the region, and the FC2, which helped create the system that debuted in 1976, has long fostered a public transit system that connects the region, its businesses and its people.

The FC2 advances partnerships between individuals, organizations and communities to create meaningful change in the District and the region.

There are also compelling reasons to write about the FC2's long-standing interest in—and commitment to—public education. Our trustees, working in collaboration with the DC Public Schools and its National Academy Foundation Career Academies, describe their partnership in providing summer internships for DC high school students.

Our story about the DC Policy Center, a new policy unit incubated by the FC2 and launching in September 2016, explores how the long-term outlook for the District will be far brighter for all residents and employers with a voice for forward-looking policy prescriptions that are rigorous and research based.

Not the least of our recent initiatives is our work on behalf of the DC government to build its core resiliency. Our feature on the District's selection for the 100 Resilient Cities Network recounts FC2's advocacy and how the designation will add an exciting new dimension to the city's sustainability efforts.

As one of the District's pre-eminent business and civic organizations, the FC2 and its trustees retain a singular focus on furthering the economic vitality and livability of the region and the city at its core. The dedication and talents of our trustees contribute daily to that focus and help advance our many initiatives.

Sincerely,



Anthony A. Williams



METRO

The Long Road Ahead

This year marks Metro's 40th birthday but the commemoration is a somber one. After years of neglect and mounting maintenance and safety problems—including critical safety lapses, electrical fires and weekly breakdowns—there would appear to be little to celebrate.

Yet regional transportation experts, policymakers and business leaders are taking the long view. They have put their support behind Paul Weidefeld, general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), who has been at the helm of the beleaguered agency since November 2015. It is recognition that the region's economic development will be best served with a vibrant public transportation system.

And while there have been some vocal critics among federal leaders in recent months, there has been a change in the debate of late, one that acknowledges what Weidefeld is working to improve the system.

"We think Paul Weidefeld is tackling the big challenges," says Anthony A. Williams, CEO and Executive Director of the Federal City Council (FC2). "One of the recent things he's doing is setting expectations at the right level. He's got a huge problem and people need to understand what he can realistically do in the time period he's been given."

To address those concerns, Weidenfeld launched Metro's maintenance initiative known as SafeTrack, a one-year, track improvement plan to restore

safety and reliability. The plan includes 15 so-called "safety surges" that will address maintenance backlogs while closing stations for up to six weeks and single-tracking certain lines.

The FC2 was integral in the creation of the Metro system in the 1970s and has been a strong influence as a facilitator, leader and advocate for the new transportation system. Metro was created to help the economic vitality of the city and provide access for workers to all parts of the District. Then, as now, regional and federal collaboration was essential and the FC2 provided the space for a unified voice to emerge.

"This is why the FC2 was created, to be a resource during crises like this," says Emeka Moneme, Deputy Executive Director of the FC2. "It dovetails with the work on regional collaboration and global competitiveness. We need a reliable Metro to maintain our region's competitive advantage."

Strategic real estate development investments were made across the region based on the viability of the Metro. A decrease in the predictability and quality of transit service destabilizes this fundamental assumption and begins to place the value of those investments at risk. If the Metro becomes unreliable, it fundamentally changes how The District works.

"A huge part of our GPD is related to Metro, as we intended it to be," says Williams. "That's what it should be and always has been, but we have to get its operations on a more sustainable basis."



Photograph provided by WMATA

What lies ahead are important questions for the region's leaders and key decision makers, ones that address future transportation needs by examining the best ways to accommodate a growing population, changing travel patterns and the best use of technology.

The 2015 U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) report, *Beyond Traffic: Trends and Choices 2045*, cautions that in 2045 there will be nearly twice as many older Americans who will need quality transit connections to medical and other services, and that many citizens, particularly millennials, will continue reducing trips by car in favor of transit and intercity passenger rail. By 2050, emerging megaregions could absorb 75 percent of the U.S. population.

DC City Councilman Jack Evans, Chairman of the Board of the WMATA, has noted that the region has the transportation system that it created. Leaders must ask themselves: how do we best align decisions and dollars and how do we invest those dollars in the smartest way possible? And what role should the private sector play?

"The business community in the region should start having some conversations that ask the question, how did we get here?" said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx at the FC2 Spring Board Meeting in May 2016. "That series of breadcrumbs should lead to some thinking about what needs

to happen going forward. What I worry about is by getting that conversation out too publicly, too early is that people will start to turn their attention to governance and money when we've got some immediate business to take care of."

As the current Metro crisis has developed, the FC2 leadership has been able to affirm its role as a trusted resource and strategic thinker by identifying and supporting those public officials who want to take on a leadership role of importance that pertain to the region's global competitiveness.

"FC2's membership is comprised of regional business and civic leaders who are able to mobilize strategic action," says Moneme. "We have the ability to bring together the large employers: university, government and private sector, regional businesses and regional development interests. The people who may have the most at risk if we have a non-functioning Metro system."

The future calls for more resourceful, responsive and adaptive governance that can meet emerging challenges. Understanding and responding to these challenges will make it possible to form the hard decisions needed to build and sustain a Metro system that meets the needs of current and future generations. ■

Career Academies' Internships Bring Businesses and Students Together

Thousands of college and high school students come to Washington, D.C. for summer jobs every year, but for a lucky few DC students, summer internships are only a short ride from home.

Some 75 District employers, including Federal City Council (FC2) members, have lined up to hire some 300 DC students for internships through the National Academy Foundation (NAF) Career Academies, which are sponsored by the DC Public Schools (DCPS).

"As a good corporate citizen, you start thinking along the lines of how to make a difference in your community," says Jim Abdo, owner of ABDO Development, who hired two students last year and two more this year. "Even an act as small as hiring a student or two for the summer can make a difference. Companies need to open their eyes to a talent pool that they never would have even considered, and they should."

This summer, the Career Ready Internship Initiative employs the 300 students in internships that run June 27 to August 5. NAF Career Academies' interns work 25 hours a week at \$9.25 per hour.

The internships have been as diverse as helping create a company's mobile app to assisting in the construction of a new boutique hotel to learning more about the back-of-the-house operations at Nationals Park.

A number of FC2 trustees' companies have signed on to participate with the NAF Career Academies' internships, excited by the opportunity to build a smart, talented workforce in the District that can contribute to the city's economic future.

"For a long time economic opportunity has been a big focus of the Federal City Council," says Anthony A. Williams, CEO and Executive Director of the FC2. "We've always been about people having a voice and having the opportunity for self-determination. We believe a big part of self-determination is economic opportunity. That's why we've been working in education and with educators. We believe it's important to show in a tangible way through the

Career Academies that education is connected to job placement and economic vitality."

The NAF is a national network of education, business and community leaders committed to transforming the high school experience to better prepare students for the workforce. The DCPS has eight NAF Career Academies, which first began enrolling high school students in the 2014-15 academic year.



Photograph provided by the Washington Nationals

"It's not an indictment of public or charter schools, but educators aren't always good at knowing how to work with business people, and business people aren't always comfortable working with educators. They don't come from the same place," says Emily Durso, Chief of Planning and Postsecondary Readiness at DCPS. "The NAF model gives you a curriculum and professional support and a partner at the table to keep it all going in the right direction."

Divided into three industry concentrations—engineering, hospitality and information technology—the NAF Career Academies offer a rare opportunity for some 1,200 DC high school students to participate in rigorous job-preparation curriculum, work-based internships and industry-recognized certifications. In the District, the NAF Career Academies will continue to grow as DCPS adds two new academies in

the health sciences that will work with local hospitals to train students and offer internships. The goal is to have a total of 12 NAF Career Academies in the DCPS.

"Now that business people have engaged and committed to the Career Academies, everyone sees the value of the internships," says Durso. "We have made it so easy for our industry partners by running all students through a rigorous work preparation program and by using the Summer Youth Employment funds [from the DC Department] there is no cost to any employer."

Durso says that Career Academies' students are put through a rigorous work-readiness program, known as tenacity training, to ensure they are ready for their internships. A lot of them have gone on visits to familiarize themselves with potential job sites, and they're taught the basics of how to fit into a workplace.



Photograph provided by Abdo Development

The Washington Nationals has about 15 Career Ready Internships this summer, and the emphasis is giving students a broad experience of the club's culture and workforce. "The students receive training in sales and marketing, events management, broadcasting, community engagement. They even see how the control room for the scoreboard operates," says Gregory McCarthy, vice president of community engagement for the Washington Nationals.

"You know that besides doing something beneficial for the kids who participate, you're doing something that the city considers strategic, so we're to accomplish a lot more than a random act of kindness"

FC2 trustees to offer summer internships for DC students. He says the program requires some attention to detail in terms of establishing the internships and guiding the students, but the payoff is high for both student and company.

"There's no company out there that doesn't have minor tasks that need to be dealt with," says Abdo. "It doesn't mean you're taking young people and having them stuff envelopes all day long. You start small and with minimal tasks to get these young people engaged, and then you can feed them more and more challenging tasks. They respond to it. They want to do more."

McCarthy notes that the team was particularly interested in being a part of the program because it was fully supported by both Mayor Bowser and DCPS Chancellor Kaya Henderson.

"Businesses appreciate the kind of clarity and unity of purpose that was articulated by the chancellor, and we were pleased to see the school system and the DC government are financially and programmatically vested in the Career Academies," says McCarthy. "You know that besides doing something beneficial for the kids who participate, you're doing something that the city considers strategic, so we're able to accomplish a lot more than a random act of kindness." ■



DC POLICY CENTER

Fostering Better Government with Better Information

To ensure Washington, DC, policymakers have accurate, timely and independent information when making critical decisions for and about the District, the Federal City Council (FC2) is launching the DC Policy Center in fall 2016 to provide crucial intelligence and potential policy solutions.

The Center will foster debate based on its research and data while also providing practical policy solutions for elected officials and civic leaders. The FC2 anticipates that the Center will be a rigorous engine for research and analysis to help guide the efforts of the District's policymakers.

"We envision the Center's policy and investment recommendations will be made within the context of balancing economic and social development, promoting prudent fiscal policy and keeping a watchful eye on the city's regional, national and global competitive position," says Anthony A. Williams, FC2 CEO and Executive Director. "While the Center will be involved occasionally in presenting the opposition case to specific proposals under consideration by the DC Council, the majority of its efforts will be directed towards proactive recommendations for achieving our mission."

Despite the District's recent positive economic performance, the city's economy faces strong headwinds and tough decisions ahead. Successfully

addressing these, and taking advantage of economic opportunities as they arise, will be critical to increasing the District's growth, notes Williams. The Center will serve a key role in advancing these activities.

At its core, the Center will focus on comprehensive research and data analysis, developing external communication strategies to promote its work and offering educational seminars for District officials and civic leaders. The Center's activities will complement the work already being done by existing employer organizations and other public policy groups.

"While reflecting the concerns of the business community, the Center will be thoughtful, balanced and accurate in its research, analysis and recommendations," says Kevin Clinton, FC2's Chief Operating Officer. "In creating the Center, the Federal City Council recognizes the importance of analysis from a private-sector policy institute, especially one that is independent of political party or ideology."

The benefits of independent entities have been reinforced on multiple occasions in recent years, including through the DC Tax Revision Commission's successful effort to secure improvements in the DC tax code and FC2's recent

engagement with the DC Council on its proposed legislation to provide universal leave in the District.

The FC2 will incubate the Center, with the goal of establishing it as an independent 501(c)3 organization within the next five years and making it financially and operationally self-sustaining. The Center's core activities will focus on research and analysis, strategy development and the education of elected and civic leaders.

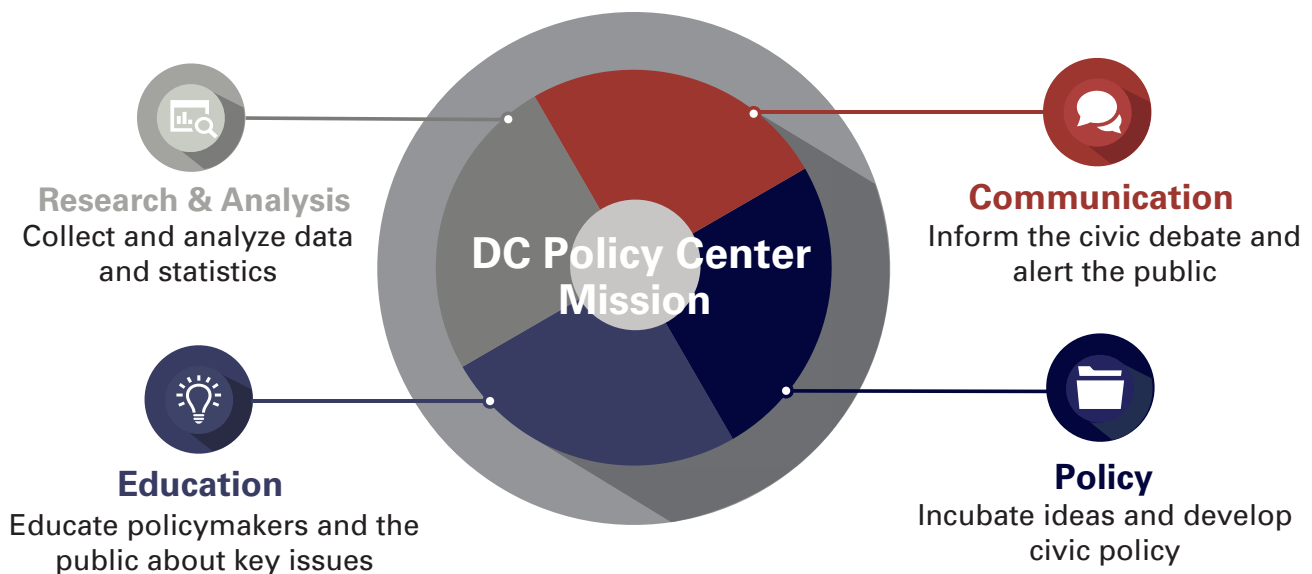
"In creating the Center, the Federal City Council recognizes the importance of analysis from a private-sector policy institute, especially one that is independent of political party or ideology."

Through its research, the Center will identify problems, prepare factual information and data to

define and understand those problems, and develop and evaluate alternative solutions. Research will be conducted in cooperation with local officials, often with the assistance of individuals from the private sector and universities. The FC2 expects the Center to develop working relationships with a wide variety of government officials, civic agencies and citizen groups.

While most of the Center's financial support will come from the business community and foundations, it will also welcome contributions from individuals who support the Center's mission to deliver research reports and other resources that will be valuable in addressing local government and policy issues.

"The Federal City Council and our partners believe that the long-term outlook for the District of Columbia will be far brighter for all residents and employers with a voice for forward-looking policy prescriptions that are rigorous and research based," says Williams. "We hope that the Center's mission will attract the support of more individuals and groups committed to thoughtful, business-focused research and analysis." ■



Toward a More Resilient Washington, DC

Washington, DC, has joined an elite global group of cities seeking to build resilience against complex physical, social and economic challenges in the 21st century. These challenges include globalization, climate change, congestion and economic inequality.

From among 1,100 applicants, Washington was one of 37 international cities granted this honor by 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), a nonprofit organization underwritten by The Rockefeller Foundation. The Federal City Council (FC2) assisted the District in applying for the membership, which provides services to select cities for heightening management and organizational capabilities.

"The Rockefeller Foundation wants to make 100 global cities ready to not only solve issues they have to today, but to develop the capabilities necessary to be resilient when they're faced with the challenges that are coming in the future," says FC2 CEO and Executive Director Anthony A. Williams. "Washington, DC, is fortunate to be part of this network of cities as it contemplates its own current and future challenges."

By joining the 100RC Network, the District will receive funding to hire a chief resilience officer for two years and to develop a holistic City Resilience Strategy Plan. This partnership not only brings member cities new tools to deal with evolving risks, but also ensures city sustainability through strengthened ability in threat response.

"Washington, DC, has always been a symbol of strength for our nation, and the city's inclusion in the 100 Resilient Cities Network will put us on a path to an even brighter, more resilient future," says Mayor Muriel Bowser. "As our nation's capital grows, we must find ways to bolster our resilience while protecting and preserving our prosperity. We look forward to our partnership with 100 Resilient Cities."

In its 100RC application, the District targeted several challenges with awarded funds, including economic inequality, terrorism and climate change. The city's

primary concern is economic inequality because the District must improve opportunities and strengthen neighborhoods without triggering the negative outcomes attributed to gentrification.

"We recognize that Washington is one of five cities nationally with the greatest disparity between incomes of its wealthiest and poorest residents," says Terry Golden, an FC2 trustee who worked on the application. "Honestly, there's a consensus on what needs to be done. What challenges us is how to get the work done. The mayor needs to harness the business community, nonprofits, universities and government so that we're partnering on behalf of the city."

The 100RC global initiative announced its latest slate of member cities in May. These new participants include Nairobi, Jakarta, Buenos Aires and seven American cities (Atlanta, DC, Honolulu, Louisville, Minneapolis, Nashville and Seattle). A unique partnership involving Miami, Miami Beach and Miami Dade County also was announced. Since its inception, 100RC has held three application rounds and received more than 1,000 submissions to join the network.

"The 100 Resilient Cities Network is showing the global community a new way of coping with shared, complex challenges – building urban resilience," says Judith Rodin, the foundation president. "Incorporating resilience planning and principles not only prepares cities for disasters and long-term threats, but also improves everyday living standards for all members of an urban community."

With this announcement, 100RC reached its foundational 100-city membership. "The threshold of success for 100RC will not solely be progress within our network of 100 cities," notes Michael Berkowitz, the president of 100RC. "Instead, it will be the ability for solutions to scale, and for all cities around the world to build on the innovative work leveraged by these 100 Resilient Cities through implementation of their resilience strategies." ■

CityShare Web Portal Goes Live

The Federal City Council's (FC2's) CityShare initiative speeds progress toward better public sector management by opening new avenues for cities to share best practices and help people committed to their cities work collaboratively on emerging challenges.

And the central vehicle for that collaboration is CityShare's new web portal (cityshare.org). The website provides access to practical tools and resources, opportunities for peer engagement and access to 9 billion documents and other assets.

"We're trying to provide the same kind of analysis, appreciation of metrics and management of knowledge that the private sector uses," says Anthony A. Williams, CEO and Executive Director of the FC2. "The public sector is not in a life-or-death competition like the private sector, and all our information is public, yet we do very little sharing or real networking around solutions and strategies. We want to change that."

Cities that become members of CityShare have access to high quality, useful content that is in the public domain but is currently inaccessible or difficult to find. Through CityShare's website, cities can access useful reports, studies, tools and templates that have helped peer cities improve services and operate efficiently.

The CityShare website hosts a powerful research tool, Inno360, that allows member cities to engage with the latest interdisciplinary urban research and share insights and files through shared networks.

Initially, CityShare will focus on cities located in the mid-Atlantic and topically on performance analytics, smart cities, financial turnaround and resiliency. By leveraging open government resources and sharing them broadly, CityShare brings to light the lessons and intelligence of the people who care most about improving local government. ■

Anacostia Waterfront Trust Marks its First Year

In the year since its founding, the Anacostia Waterfront Trust is on the move. It has launched a number of innovative initiatives, from the creation of a community consortium to encourage citywide collaboration to its groundbreaking green infrastructure program in the District.

A highlight of the Trust's first year has been the creation of the Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative, a consortium of 16 nonprofits committed to revitalizing the Anacostia River corridor—the 1,200 acres of federal and DC parklands and adjacent neighborhoods. The consortium comprises groups from east and west of the river, coalescing around a vision of thriving communities, a world-class waterfront and urban park, and a swimmable, fishable river.

The Trust is in the early stages of bringing all interested stakeholders together through the Collaborative to develop a citizens' master plan for the corridor. The goal is to create a resilient, equitable river corridor by addressing issues such as riverbank development, income inequality and gentrification.

Additionally, RainPay, the Trust's initiative to reduce the negative impact of stormwater runoff, has gained traction with local developers. This program, a cornerstone of the Trust's water quality efforts, helps to restore the Anacostia by installing the highest quality green infrastructure to reduce pollution and erosion in the areas of the District where it has the most environmental and social impact. The Trust's program works within the framework of the District's recently created stormwater credit system—the only system of its kind in the world. RainPay makes the system work—linking regulated building developers and owners to credit-generating stormwater projects that maximize social, environmental and job benefits.

The Trust continues to move forward its ambitious, multi-year project with limited resources at its disposal. This remains a monumental effort, and the Trust welcomes offers of assistance from FC2 members. ■



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