

White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities (SC2) Accomplishments in Youngstown, OH

“The Strong Cities, Strong Communities partnership with the City of Youngstown will enable us to develop stronger capacities in our daily administrative operations and promote more coordinated communications between City Hall and our customers. The technical assistance already provided by SC2 has encouraged us to realign priorities in the areas of demolition and blight removal, and has forced us to re-examine our staffing needs and areas where we can improve service delivery. Overall, SC2 is helping the City of Youngstown transition to a more effective model of governance.”

- Youngstown Mayor John McNally

The Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative (SC2) supports President Obama’s agenda to make historic investments to build ladders of opportunity for those working hard to make it to the middle class and to partner with communities that were hardest-hit by the recent recession. Under SC2, communities **including Youngstown, OH** have received intensive technical assistance from federal inter-agency teams that work alongside the mayor in City Hall to support the community’s vision for economic development.

SC2 is working with **Youngstown** to increase coordination around comprehensive city and regional planning and enhance the City’s capacity to address its priorities of economic and workforce development, land use, criminal justice, health and human services, information technology, and municipal operations. Key SC2 accomplishments in **Youngstown** include:

- Worked with the Department of Justice to **support a Diagnostic Center engagement in Youngstown to improve public safety by using data to better understand and measure community needs**, recognize trends, establish baselines, determine data-driven strategies to increase public safety, and leverage available resources in communities. As part of ongoing technical assistance to Youngstown, in October 2013 the Diagnostic Center sponsored a multi-day training for the command staff of the Youngstown Police Department (YPD), aimed at enhancing agency and officer performance evaluation. Subject matter experts from the Johns Hopkins University, School of Education, Division of Public Safety Leadership led the training.¹
- **Improved the City’s process for dealing with high property vacancy rates** to promote state and local regulatory changes for targeted demolition activities, and helped to better administer the use of existing resources. The Department of Housing and Urban Development commissioned a contractor **to review the regulations that complicate effective demolition activities** due to the City’s high vacancy rates, presenting recommendations to improve the process.
- Partnered with NASA to **promote job creation, business technology and support for local manufacturers**. NASA subject matter experts have engaged local small businesses, providing technical problem solving to help promote stronger business creation and better productivity. This is part of a broader NASA regional effort and series of “road shows,” which has also supported manufacturing and business development in the Cleveland area, among other Ohio communities.
- Worked with Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to **provide the community with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers** to boost local capacity. The volunteers are providing support to the City’s community planning needs.

¹ The U.S. Department of Justice Diagnostic Center is working with community leaders across the country to implement evidence-based strategies to help make communities safer, and has already provided assistance to over two dozen communities.