

City Washington DC	
Country	United States of America
Population	702,000
Title of policy or practice	Transformative Governance
Subtitle (optional)	Integrating food policy across municipal agencies and community partners in Washington, DC
Category	Governance
SDGs	SDGs: 1,2,3,8,10,11,17.
Brief description	<p>Washington, DC transformed its approach to local food policy through the creation of the DC Food Policy Director (FPD) and DC Food Policy Council (FPC) within the District government. Prior to their establishment, District agencies and community organizations had no central place to convene and collaborate. In 2015, Mayor Bowser signed the DC Food Policy Council and Director Establishment Act to help advance food policies for a more equitable, healthy, and sustainable District food system.</p> <p>The FPD advises the Mayor on strategies to improve the District's food system, coordinates food policy across government agencies and community partners, and researches national and international best practices that could be implemented in the District. Located in the DC Office of Planning (OP), the FPD ensures food policy is integrated into citywide plans like the Comprehensive Plan and connected to crosscutting initiatives within health, transportation, and housing. The FPC, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the DC Council, are local leaders in the District's food system that advise the FPD on food policy issues. The FPC provides a platform for complex conversations around local food systems and engages residents, including those most impacted by food policies.</p> <p>Since their inception, the FPD and FPC have been instrumental in coordinating efforts across agencies and community organizations, transforming how the District approaches food policy and propelling the District's leadership in national and international food policy. For example, the FPD helped coordinate the District's food system goals in the Sustainable DC 2.0 Plan, the District's sustainability plan. With support from the FPD, Mayor Bowser signed onto the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact in 2018. As the U.S. Conference of Mayors Food Systems Taskforce Co-chair, Mayor Bowser also advocated against proposed rollbacks of federal government assistance programs in the 2018 Farm Bill, with guidance from the FPD.</p>
Date of start and state (ongoing/completed)	01/2015 - Ongoing
Actors and stakeholders involvement	The FPD coordinates food policy efforts across government agencies and community partners. The FPC consists of 12 mayoral-appointed leaders within the District's food system and 10 ex-officio government members from District agencies. Together, the FPD and FPC engage residents, private sector stakeholders, and foundations to advance equitable food policies.
Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Convene a cross-sectoral group of local food system stakeholders; 2) Identify gaps, challenges, and inequities in the local food system; 3) Secure buy-in and commitment from the local government and provide evidence to support the group's goals; 4) Collaborate to determine the appropriate structure and location of a body to provide strategic input into food policies; 5) Establish the structure and create a strategic plan with metrics to ensure progress and accountability.

<p>Innovation</p>	<p>While a growing number of cities and states have food policy councils, the FPD and FPC are unique. First, most food policy councils are established by advocates outside of government. Creating a FPD and FPC within the Executive Branch enables them to have increased access to policymakers and reliable funding for operations.</p> <p>The FPD and FPC engage the community in innovative ways. The FPC creates community advocacy guides on emerging legislation, maintains a food policy tracker on its website, and sends alerts for upcoming opportunities for civic engagement. These resources equip residents with the insight they need to confidently testify at public hearings and other events. In 2018, the FPC launched a program to engage low-income residents experiencing a lack of healthy food in their communities. The FPC partners with a community food justice organization, DC Greens, to host community meals with these residents, generating conversation and community-driven solutions. Thus far, 125 residents have participated in the events and learned about local food policies.</p> <p>The FPD also facilitates interagency collaboration on cross-cutting topics. For example, in early 2019 the FPD hosted a convening with 60+ government and community partners to discuss how to strengthen workforce development and advance opportunities for low-wage workers in the food system. The FPD is now leading the creation of a District-wide strategy to improve employment opportunities and spur healthy food access</p>
<p>Impact</p>	<p>The FPD and FPC catalyze both government action and public awareness of important local food policy issues impacting vulnerable populations and inequities in the food system. More than 1,500 residents a year attend the bi-monthly meetings and participate in five working groups. In partnership with community partners, the FPC has supported the implementation of local food policies that expand healthy food access. Since 2015, Mayor Bowser has signed several important pieces of food-related legislation including the Healthy Students Amendment Act, which bolsters the quality and nutrition of school meals; the Healthy Parks Act, which increases access to summer meals for low-income children; the WIC Expansion Act, which enables small food retailers to accept nutrition assistance vouchers for pregnant women and young children; and the Urban Farming and Food Security Act, which creates public land and tax incentives for urban farms.</p> <p>Because the FPC operates in the nexus of diverse stakeholders in the local food system, it is dynamic and responsive to the different needs of vulnerable residents. For example, during the U.S. federal government shutdown in January 2019, the FPC coordinated available food assistance resources in the District and compiled them for furloughed workers and impacted residents. The list of resources was shared across the District government and local news sources, and more than 1,500 people used the list to access important resources.</p>
<p>Inclusion</p>	<p>By design, the FPD and FPC are wide-reaching and engage stakeholders across the District. Ten different District agencies, like the Department of Health and the Department of Energy and the Environment, are represented in the FPC as ex-officio members and leverage the FPD and FPC's food policy expertise in their programming and policies. Representatives from more than 30 local community organizations participate in FPC meetings and working groups, and a diverse group of community members, including residents who have experienced a lack of healthy food in their communities, attend and participate in the meetings. The FPD and FPC also partner with academic institutions in Washington, DC to develop research and evaluate the effectiveness of food policy initiatives. Finally, the FPD and FPC collaborate with private sector partners, like food businesses and social-impact investors, to align strategies to help grow the local food economy.</p> <p>The FPD and FPC also work to improve the food system in the region surrounding Washington, DC. The FPD is part of a regional network of food system practitioners and meets regularly with those partners to collaborate on regional food goals and learn from each other. The FPD participates in several regional and national food policy coalitions and works with local food leaders across the country to share best practices. The FPD also advises the Mayor on national food policy through the U.S. Conference of Mayors.</p>
<p>Adversity coefficient</p>	