

For Immediate Release

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**NEXT CENTURY CITIES LAUNCHES
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP SERIES WITH
What Comes Next? A Community-Centered
Approach to Legacy Network Retirement,
A REPORT ON LEGACY NETWORK RETIREMENT**

Washington, D.C. (February 10, 2022) – Today, Next Century Cities (“NCC”) released a report, [*What Comes Next? A Community-Centered Approach to Legacy Network Retirement*](#). NCC is committed to centering the lived experiences of local residents through research and practice. Lukas Pietrzak contributed to the conversation with an analysis of consumer-focused legacy network retirement policies.

Francella Ochillo, Executive Director of Next Century Cities, offered the following remarks:

“Next Century Cities is not only focused on closing the digital divide but on addressing the regulatory policies and market conditions that perpetuate digital inequities. Our 2022 thought leadership series showcases policy proposals, provides a platform for thought-provoking questions, and unearths community-level impact stories that could make broadband policy at all three levels of government more effective.

[*What Comes Next? A Community-Centered Approach to Legacy Network Retirement*](#) is a report that encourages federal policymakers to rethink 2017 changes to network retirement guidance. It not only highlights the expertise that Lukas Pietrzak has added to Next Century Cities’ body of work for the last two and half years but illustrates his personal and our organization’s commitment to developing broadband solutions that put consumers first.

“Our team couldn’t be more proud of what Lukas has accomplished at Next Century Cities and his willingness to tackle public interest challenges as a civil servant with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) starting next week. Since 2019, Lukas has worked to equip and empower local leaders who face crippling digital divides in their communities. We trust that he will approach his role at NTIA with

the same vigor and, more importantly, help the agency welcome new and unconventional thinkers into the agency's network.”

Lukas Pietrzak, Program Manager of Partnership and Campaigns at Next Century Cities, stated:

“While many communities benefit from the newest, fastest, and most reliable broadband technology of our day, others are still struggling to secure a baseline connection. For 11.5 million Americans, access to the Internet depends on network infrastructure that was laid decades ago. Its capabilities and design were revolutionary in its time but legacy networks were not designed to accommodate current high-speed broadband demands.

“As communities across the country develop innovative broadband infrastructure and digital equity plans, strong and timely federal regulations provide critical reinforcements. The FCC laid the groundwork for a consumer-focused approach to policies that govern legacy network retirement in its *2015 Retirement Order*. It is time for the agency to revisit and reintroduce consumer protections that promote competition, support public safety, and require sufficient notice for those who may inadvertently be disconnected during transition processes.”

The full report can be accessed [here](#). A blog post highlighting key takeaways can be found [here](#).

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