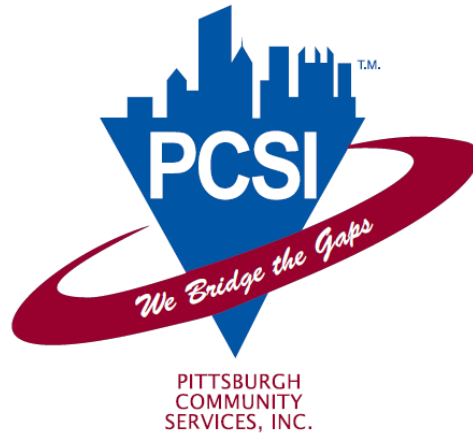

Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc.



Strategic Plan

2017-2019

Funding for this project was provided by
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In early 2016, the Board of Directors of Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc., began the process of updating PCSI's Strategic Plan, which has been expired since 2006. The Board hired a consultant, and the entire PCSI organization spent several months reviewing the previous plan, considering the most pressing needs for the agency, and developing new strategies to guide the organization.

The planning consultant for 2017-2019 PCSI Strategic Plan development was:

John A. Wilson

Progress Resources Inc.

PO Box 687, Waynesburg, PA 15370

Document Overview

The 2017-2019 Strategic Plan outlines in detail the process that PCSI went through to update its previous plan (active from 2003-2006), and provides descriptions of the key outcomes and strategies that form the framework of its new plan. The 24-page report consists of two main sections: the first explains the development process and the second describes the updated outcomes and strategies.

Section I Plan Development

The strategic planning process took place between February of 2016 and November 2016 and will conclude with the organization's review of the final Strategic Plan report. The major elements of the planning process are articulated through the following paragraphs.

I.A Prior Strategic Plan

PCSI Board Members and staff reviewed and analyzed the previous strategic plan (from 2003-2006). They considered which strategies from the previous plan remained relevant and which did not. They also considered whether the organization had achieved each of the goals it set out to achieve. Several strategies were selected that remained relevant to the work of the agency (and these were later incorporated into the new strategies outlined in Section II).

On the whole, the organization's Board and staff agreed that **PCSI did not significantly achieve the goals of the 2003 plan**. This acknowledgment drove home the importance of the agency's current planning efforts.

I.B PCSI Customer Characteristics

The plan lists several PCSI-gathered data points that describe the organization's customers. These were considered as part of the much larger set of data (including Census estimates and other large-scale, public data) through the 2016 Community Needs Assessment, and collectively, these data were used to inform planning decisions. A few notable examples of the PCSI-specific data include:

During the 2015 program year total clients served totaled **1,308** (67% female).

9% did not have a high school diploma.

64% of clients had incomes below 50% of the poverty level. Only 12% had incomes over 100% of the federal poverty level.

I.C Organization Assessment

Before the board met to develop the framework of the revised strategic plan, all members of the PCSI board and staff were offered the chance to convey their thoughts through an agency-wide assessment. Staff ranked different program areas based on agency effectiveness in recent years. Staff members were also asked to provide input for an initial SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). The results are included in the plan, along with specific surveys responses from staff and board members.

I.D Board of Directors' Planning Retreat

In June of 2016, the board met to review the various input that had been solicited through the organization assessment process. During the retreat, board members took part in planning exercises, including:

Identification of concerns

Review of the PCSI Mission and Vision statements, and brainstorming activity (results below)

Final SWOT Analysis

Identification of Strategy Domains and Areas (listed below)

Mission and Vision

The board resolved to update PCSI's Mission and Vision statements to better reflect the organization's work and goals. Proposals for revised PCSI Mission and Vision statements, developed based on both Board and staff input, are listed below.

MISSION

Proposed PCSI Mission, Version 1:

PCSI's mission is to strengthen individuals, families and communities, in greater Pittsburgh, by bridging the gaps from poverty toward sustained prosperity!

Our mission is accomplished through advocacy, strategic collaborations, partnerships, case management directed services and innovative solutions that effect systemic change!

"We bridge the gaps!"

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 2:

PCSI's mission is to strengthen individuals, families and communities, in Pittsburgh, by bridging the gaps from poverty toward sustained prosperity!

Our mission is accomplished through advocacy, strategic collaborations, partnerships, case management directed services and innovative solutions that effect systemic change!

"We bridge the gaps!"

VISION

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 1:

PCSI is recognized as the innovative Community Action leader in reducing the impact of poverty, in greater Pittsburgh, through direct service, advocacy, *mobilizing* and *leveraging* resources, sustainable economic empowerment and effective institutional change.

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 2:

PCSI is recognized as the innovative Community Action leader in reducing the impact of poverty, in Pittsburgh, through direct service, advocacy, *mobilizing* resources, sustainable economic empowerment and effective institutional change.

Strategy Domains and Areas

The Board developed three Strategy Domains and six Strategy Areas that PCSI will use as the structure of its 2017-2019 Strategic Plan. They are shown in the table below.

TABLE 7 Recommended Strategic Focus Areas		
Domain Areas That Reached Top Priority		
1. Housing	2. Employment	3. Food and Nutrition
Strategies Areas		
1. Increase Comprehensive Case Management Services	2. Create Structured Advocacy Policies and Practices	3. Build, Expand and Maintain Strategic Partnerships
4. Increase Funding Opportunities	5. Develop Agency Capacity	6. Expand Service Sites and Develop Innovative Projects

Section II PCSI Outcomes and Strategies

The seven core outcomes that PCSI will attempt to generate in the following three years are listed as follows, along with a brief bulleted list of potential strategies for each. This information is also displayed in a table on pages 22-24 of the Strategic Plan. As the agency moves forward in implementing the Strategic Plan, PCSI will develop more detailed plans to accomplish each of these outcomes.

Outcome 1.) PCSI will fully implement the Community Service Block Grant Organizational Standards.

- Conduct a comprehensive organizational review and risk assessment.
- Implement staff and board training.
- Develop more effective tracking systems.

Outcome 2.) PCSI will achieve greater agency sustainability.

- Increase ratio of funding leveraged from CSBG.
- Strengthen relationships with current funders and develop relationships with new ones.
- Expand services and locations.
- Develop social enterprises that generate revenue for PCSI.

Outcome 3.) PCSI will have greater visibility citywide in matters related to poverty.

- Expand geographic area of service.
- Develop neighborhood centers in critical locations.
- Increase advocacy work from both board and staff.
- Develop and Strengthen inter-organizational partnerships.

Outcome 4.) The culture of PCSI will be transformed to an improved customer service model with an emphasis on comprehensive case management.

- Improve links between various PCSI programs (and partner programs).
- Implement intake and case management procedures to identify and address all needs of customers.
- Develop better data management and tracking systems.

Outcome 5.) PCSI customers (and city residents generally) will have increased housing stability.

- Expand current housing services to begin generating more meaningful results for customers.
- Incorporate a greater variety of housing services into new comprehensive case management system.
- Create new, innovative programs in the area of housing, e.g., a Pittsburgh housing navigator system for low-income residents.

Outcome 6.) PCSI customers will increase skills and find employment.

- Use Neighborhood Centers (Outcome 3) as venues for new and expanded workforce development efforts.
- Create innovative opportunities in the area of employment, e.g., hands-on training at PCSI social enterprises.
- Expand existing Work Ready program to better target quality employment opportunities.

Outcome 7.) PCSI will reduce food insecurity city-wide.

- Expand existing inter-organizational partnerships related to food.
- Create new, innovative enterprises, e.g., community gardens and aquaponic garden systems.

For more information on the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, please contact:

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PCSI 2016 Strategic Plan

OVERVIEW:

A strategic planning process is dynamic and cyclic. A good strategic planning process uses a formalized framework that permits and encourages participation of an organization's key stakeholders. The process must create consensus of those responsible to guide and administer the organization's activities.

The Board of Directors of PCSI understands the need for a good strategic plan. They have therefore begun a process to modify, expand and strengthen PCSI's existing strategic plan. During spring and summer 2016, most agency board and staff members participated in activities that included a formal review and consideration of updates to the agency's strategic plan.

1. PCSI and Progress Resources, Inc. entered into a contract for strategic planning services in February, 2016.
2. In March, 2016 discussion with the Board of Directors Strategic Planning Committee provided orientation and guidance for the project.
3. Between March and June, 2016 interviews were conducted with Board Directors, staff, clients of the agency and other community key informants.
4. A preliminary internet-based survey of the Board was conducted during June, 2016. This survey was administered to gain preliminary opinion data and gauge the shared level of interest and commitment toward a renewed planning process.
5. A one-day workshop, facilitated by John Wilson of Progress Resources Inc., was held on June 25, 2016, to revisit the findings from the needs assessment work, review the mission and vision of the organization, and establish both the priorities and the direction that the board wants to see in the coming years.

The process began because the Board of Directors had determined the current plan was developed in an environment quite different from the one than now existed, following both staff changes at the agency and other funding and community changes that will impact the work of the agency going forward. Additionally, the adoption of the National Community Action Organizational Standards—with a strong focus on operationalizing the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) performance management framework—created a need for revisions to the current strategic plan. The Board recognized that the funding environment is rapidly changing and operational responses should be proactive rather than reactive. Also, a number of board leaders had developed a perception that shared consensus on priorities and future actions may no longer exist.

Board leadership was determined to revisit a formal planning process to minimize uncertainties, facilitate coordination between and within board and staff, and enhance the organization's competitiveness. Board members and staff have committed to utilizing data and agreements from the assessment and incorporating planning activities done to date in the establishment of a Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2019. Doing so will also support a continuing planning process and facilitate communications necessary to coordinate the activities that should be pursued in the short term so PCSI can successfully accomplish its mission.

PRIOR STRATEGIC PLAN (2003-2006)

The process of updating the strategic plan started with a review of the **2003 – 2006 Strategic Plan** of PCSI. Board Directors and staff were provided an opportunity to comment on the progress made under the previous plan. While the previous plan concluded 10 years ago, some of the strategies remained relevant.

The goals of PCSI stated in the 2003 Strategic Plan were divided into the following categories:

1. Identity
2. Advocacy
3. Direct Services - Internal
4. Indirect Programs - External
5. Governance

These strategies were identified in the 2003 Plan:

- Develop strategic partnerships to increase the impact of effective programs and services.
- Develop and empower staff and Board leadership so they can be active ambassadors and vocal advocates for PCSI's agenda.
- Develop an annual advocacy agenda informed through community input, with funding and partners to support its implementation.
- Increase technical assistance, professional development opportunities, capacity-building programs, and support to partner and sub-contractor agencies.
- Increase and articulate expectations and accountability from organizations receiving support from PCSL

Additionally, the plan outlined a number of activities that needed to take place including:

- Change the name of the organization
- Change locations
- Develop a website for clients and funders to learn about the agency
- Modify contract language to include language for subcontractors to recognize PCSI funding
- Develop an advocacy agenda and media alerts
- Partner with other agencies to conduct seminars promoting small business and wealth creation
- Increase the direct programs and services that PCSI offers to the community

- Expand internal programs, specifically the Supported Work Program (Work Ready), Project Life Line (purpose to reduce recidivism rate of teen offenders) and the Neighborhood Safety Program.
- Fully achieve and maintain the tri-partite capacity of the Board of Directors
- Enforce a limit of two terms for Board Directors with a mandatory one year wait period between terms
- Improve governance—having Board Committees "reengage" with development/fundraising personnel, executive and nominating committees active
- Increase communications and reporting between the designee representatives of public official board members

Some of these areas of focus were met successfully, and some surfaced again in the current assessment and planning process. Staff were asked to assess the progress and the importance of previous goals. Generally, staff believed that the previous goals from the 2003 plan continued to be important to the work of PCSI, but staff also believed that PCSI did not significantly achieve the goals of the 2003 plan.

Members of the Board of Directors were also asked to make a similar assessment and came to the same conclusion—that the goals and activities remained important but were not fully achieved. Only one board member had participated in the previous strategic planning process.

From the 2003 Plan, the Board of Directors identified the following strategies as still relevant:

- PCSI's Board of Directors and staff determined that PCSI should be known as an Advocate agency, being a vocal advocate for impoverished individuals and families and their plight.
- Expand agency capacity via partnerships with other agencies (external).
- Improve governance were adopted as a goal. Is having Board Committees "reengage", with development/fundraising personnel, executive and nominating committees active.
- Increase communications and reporting between the designee representatives of public official board members.
- Fully achieve and maintain the tri-partite capacity of the Board of Directors.
- Develop staff leadership and professional capacity by providing offering training and professional development opportunities.

Board Directors were split on the relevance of three strategies:

- Increase the direct programs and services that PCSI offers to the community.
- Expand internal programs: the Supported Work Program (Work Ready), Project Life Line (purpose to reduce recidivism rate of teen offenders), and the Neighborhood Safety Program.
- Enforce a limit of two terms for members, with a mandatory one-year wait period between terms.

Some comments from these discussions included:

Identity – “name change, location change, establish process for acknowledgement of pass-through dollars by other agencies, and create a web site.” Location change and web site have been accomplished.

Advocacy – “PCSI's advocacy agenda will be published and circulated annually.” This was not done.

Direct Services – “PCSI would like to offer more programming and services to the community.” A review of the numbers of units of service and numbers of clients served show that these are still very low. These need to be addressed in the new Plan.

Indirect Programs – “PCSI staff and program managers will develop additional performance and reporting requirements for agencies receiving funds.” This process may have been developed but did not increase acknowledgement of PCSI’s involvement in the general public’s awareness.

Governance – “The PCSI Board of Directors must expand in order to assist with the implementation of the recommendations in this strategic plan. Committees need to be reengaged. The Board should meet on a more frequent and regular basis, and they have to hold themselves and the organization's leadership to a greater degree of accountability.” These challenges appear to still plague the organization and are on the agenda for being addressed in the new Plan.

PCSI CUSTOMER CHARACTERISTICS 2015

As a baseline to the planning effort, the current customer statistics for the 2015 program year were examined.

- During the 2015 program year total clients served totaled 1,308 (67% female).
- 9% did not have a high school diploma.
- 64% of clients had incomes below 50 % of the poverty level. Only 12% had incomes over 100% of the federal poverty level. PCSI is serving a populations with very low incomes.
- Food Pantry services served 402 clients in house and over 3,000 clients through subcontracts.
- Training and work development was provided for 26 clients.
- The Dollar Energy Fund program assisted 232 clients.
- 20 clients were served through Senior Nutrition Education.
- The Work Ready program served 152 clients.
- The micro-business program served 30 clients.
- The Neighborhood Safety Program helped 266 clients.
- Case Management Services were provided to 4 clients.

PRE-RETREAT to the 2016-2019 Plan Development: All board and staff members were provided opportunity to respond to an online questionnaire in advance of the workshop. Responses were collected, tallied, and aggregated for utilization in the discussion focus groups formed during the retreat.

Survey participants provided their opinions regarding such things as the value to the organization of the previous Strategic Plan; the importance and uniqueness of the organization's current activities; the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were present (through a SWOT analysis and environmental scan); and the agency's purpose, including what the best future version of the agency would look like. The purpose of the pre-retreat survey was to jump start individual thinking and to expedite the deliberative processes during the short period of the workshop.

Staff Assessment

Staff was split on their belief that the current mission statement explains and communicates the agency's purpose. A majority felt the current mission was not inspiring. Staff was asked which keywords should be included. Words identified included *self-sufficient, independence, promote growth and development, diminish, enhance, encourage, empower, support, rapport, upward mobility, assist, impact, skills, together, personal accountability, change, training, establish, development, strive, education, and dedicate.*

Staff identified affordable housing, food and nutrition, and advocacy as the top priorities for the agency to focus attention.

In assessing how well the agency is doing with services, a majority of staff identified the following areas as acceptable or outstanding:

- Employment
- Energy bill paying
- Housing assistance
- Stabilizing families through emergency assistance

The following areas were primarily identified as minimal accomplishment or unsatisfactory:

- Food Assistance
- Skill Development
- Youth Services
- Child care
- Tax Credit assistance

- Budgeting and savings
- Small business development assistance
- Safe and affordable housing preserved or improved
- Mobilization of volunteers
- Youth support

Agency staff was also asked to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing PCSI (through the SWOT analysis). The results are summarized in Table 1.

<p style="text-align: center;">TABLE 1 List of Consolidated SWOT Characteristics Generated by Staff</p>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership • Secure location • Knowledge of resources • Experience and motivated workers • Clean audits • Existing programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees not held accountable • Lack of visibility • Leadership • Not city-wide • Wages • Disorganized • Board is critical of staff-no praise • Structure • Lack Board involvement • Lack of funds • Poor hiring • Hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with community • Expand programs • Technical assistance from DCED • Employment assistance • Increase outreach • Involve youth • Build leadership • Collaborate • Establish PCSI as a training specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing same things as other agencies • Lack of brand recognition • Lack Board direction • Loss of funding • Employees not being held accountable • Lack of growth • Helping same people with same problems • Loss of key staff • Location • Lack of agency cohesion • Weak service numbers
<p>Other comments/suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish subcontracting services. • Focus on one or two services only • Focus on low-income clients. Avoid distracting services, i.e., EECO stuff • Connect more with local political system 			

Staff was asked to comment on what was needed for PCSI to be successful in future years.

Comments *included*:

“Helping people to become self-sufficient and providing support,”

“Continue to help people—not always the way they can be helped with funding or how things can be done.”

“PCSI needs to focus on one or two programs that analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of eligible clients and to which we identify and facilitate training and educational opportunities to which individuals will develop the necessary skills to increase their earning power. Maybe we should have a quarterly or semiannual advertisement wherein a specific low income client is chosen to receive an accelerated program. This does not mean we do not serve the others.”

“It’s bigger than just giving a bag of food, helping someone with a resume, or even changing a lock for someone. Believe it or not we are saving souls as well as our own. These people that come in here are broken, shattered low self-esteem, scared of reality but face it every morning they wake up. Self-sufficiency and becoming self-reliant doesn't mean that you're not in need of assistance because most of the staff that is meeting or assisting with these individuals are just a check away from needing the same assistance as them. “

“A fair and consistent leader that has passion to assist the families we serve and whose mission is to get those families in the door and on the path to self-reliance.”

“That we help people get out of their situations and move forward.”

Board Pre-Retreat Assessment

Board Directors were also asked to participate in a pre-strategy meeting survey to gather input and stimulate thoughts. Nine members of the Board of Directors participated in the survey

Early in this strategic planning process, the Board were asked to identify priorities for PCSI. Individual comments included:

“To help clients become productive individuals, able to take care of themselves and family.”

“To address the issues of all [underserved] people in the city of Pittsburgh.”

“The purpose of PCSI is to assist low-income residents of Pittsburgh in obtaining services and developing skills that will allow them to become self-sufficient.”

“PCSI is a beacon of hope for some of the most economic unfortunate [people] in our society. We are the anchor that holds them together, builds them up, and then sends them off better than when we first met. We are the voice at the tables in the rooms they can't get in, we are

the marchers on the front line advocating for opportunity and inclusion, and we are the protesters bringing about change on their behalf. Our clients are our existence; without them our purpose is meaningless.”

“To help people in cyclical poverty remove themselves from such.”

“To help folks sustain self-sufficiency.”

“To assure that the issues of poverty and self-sufficiency are aggressively addressed by the services offered by PCSI.”

“To elevate the employment housing and life skills of individuals and families to improve their self-sufficiency having.”

“Targeted individuals who are at or below the federal poverty line—to effectuate change through advocacy and mobilization toward sustainable and verifiable outcomes.”

“As the Community Action Agency for the City of Pittsburgh, we should work towards the reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities and empower the low-income population to become more self-sufficient.”

“To be the advocate for the poor in the city of Pittsburgh and to develop programs to alleviate poverty and help program participants achieve financial stability.”

“The purpose of PCSI is to serve the least of these and underprivileged individuals and families in the Pittsburgh areas.”

“To assist individuals on their path to self-sufficiency through connecting the city's fragmented and complex human services landscape and fill acute gaps, through direct services or support for those organizations that can provide direct services, in a dynamic and proactive fashion.”

THE PLANNING RETREAT:

Saturday, June 25, 2016 the Board came together to review the topics explored and questioned in the assessment process. At the retreat, the consultant provided a team building activity and informational materials such as summaries of the questionnaire responses, as well as the information gathered from interviews and surveys.

The process was interactive with the goal of achieving a shared understanding of the agency’s purpose, priority goals, and objectives for the near future (a limited time of two to three years with focus on one year intervals).

CONCERNS

TABLE 2: CONCERNS IDENTIFIED BY THE BOARD TO DISCUSS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mission—what is ours?• What programs?• Funding concerns• Agency visibility—who are we?• Whom do we serve?• Can we drive outcomes?• Get back on course• More visibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify broad goals• Best use of our resources• Broad vision established for agency and new ED• What is our part in the big system?• What directions do we want to go in?• Establish roles—who does what?• Developing a better vision for programs• Acknowledge how human service system changed |
|---|--|

The Board of Directors were asked to identify concerns that they would like to resolve during the strategic planning process. These concerns (listed in Table 2) stimulated discussion about the identified needs and resources in the community. The discussion formed the basis for fleshing out the strategic plan for the next three years. Concepts and the “agreed-to” statements produced during the retreat will also guide the further development of a more considered and detailed action plan that should be intended to respond to expectations and predictions of events and desired accomplishments.

An action plan is to be developed by staff, its implementation supervised by the executive director, with appropriate active oversight of a designated committee of the Board. This action plan will include target numbers of activities, people, and communities related to PCSI’s programs. These metrics will be a way of establishing the expectations related to the quantity of work to be done by the agency and will identify how the Board will know if the agency has been successful.

As a result of the monitoring oversight, the plan can be consciously adjusted on an ongoing basis in accord with board policy, with staff constantly responding to realities faced in the implementation of the plan.

MISSION AND VISION:

Verification of the Mission and Vision statements were considered only after the participants had an opportunity to review the results of the assessment results and the environmental scan. Retreat participants had an opportunity to review the open-ended responses derived from answers to survey questions that related to Board members and staffs understanding of the agency's purpose—or Mission—and their opinion of the agency's future goals—the Vision.

Participants were assembled into groups, each group comprised of three or four board members. Each reviewed the current mission and vision statements, and drafted language that reflected their vision for the desired accomplishment of the agency in the future. The entire group then came together to review draft language, and several draft statements were created. PCSI leadership then used this draft language, along with staff input, to create the proposed Mission and Vision statements that follow, which the Board of Directors will have the opportunity to review and adopt at the 2016 annual meeting.

MISSION: *The current published Mission Statement is:*

To address the causes of poverty, and to diminish its effects through the development, implementation, sponsorship and support of programs and activities designed to enable and empower low-income residents of the city of Pittsburgh to make measurable progress on the continuum from impoverishment to self-sufficiency.

Proposed PCSI Mission, Version 1:

PCSI's mission is to strengthen individuals, families and communities, in greater Pittsburgh, by bridging the gaps from poverty toward sustained prosperity!

Our mission is accomplished through advocacy, strategic collaborations, partnerships, case management directed services and innovative solutions that effect systemic change!

"We bridge the gaps!"

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 2:

PCSI's mission is to strengthen individuals, families and communities, in Pittsburgh, by bridging the gaps from poverty toward sustained prosperity!

Our mission is accomplished through advocacy, strategic collaborations, partnerships, case management directed services and innovative solutions that effect systemic change!

"We bridge the gaps!"

VISION: *The current published Vision Statement is:*

To have a visible impact in reducing the number of impoverished people in the City of Pittsburgh. PCSI is widely recognized in the community as a collaborative partner who routinely influences public policy decisions and is an advocate for and expert on the issues that affect the lives and wellbeing of impoverished people.

**TABLE 4
PROPOSED VISION STATEMENT**

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 1:

PCSI is recognized as the innovative Community Action leader in reducing the impact of poverty, in greater Pittsburgh, through direct service, advocacy, *mobilizing* and *leveraging* resources, sustainable economic empowerment and effective institutional change.

Proposed PCSI Vision, Version 2:

PCSI is recognized as the innovative Community Action leader in reducing the impact of poverty, in Pittsburgh, through direct service, advocacy, *mobilizing* resources, sustainable economic empowerment and effective institutional change.

Note: In both the proposed Mission and proposed Vision, use of the word “greater” has been debated. Use of the word “leveraging” has also been questioned in the Vision statement, based on the notion that it may be redundant.

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL ENVIROMENTAL SCAN AND ANALYSIS:

The Board of Directors also worked in small groups to identify the Strengths and Weaknesses of PCSI, in addition to the Opportunities and Threats which the organization must confront in the years ahead. Table 5 outlines the results of this discussion. The flexibility of CSBG, Charter as the Community Action Agency for Pittsburgh, PCSI’s facilities, and the organization’s experience were among the strengths of the organization. There was a recognition that the Board needed to be more engaged and agency funding needed to be diversified. Directors were also concerned about the loss of senior staff, the shift in low-income population occurring in the city and encroachment of other service providers. The planning process provided an opportunity for a new direction, new leadership, and expansion of funding.

<p align="center">TABLE 5 List of Consolidated SWOT Characteristics Generated by PCSI Board</p>			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility of CSBG • Platform/Charter as the Community Action Agency • Physical Facility and presence • Knowledge of resources • Experience workers • Clean audits • Focus on people • Compassionate board • Community driven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board engagement • Brand awareness • Funding (lack of diversity) • Lack of consistent direction or focus • Staff lacks training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Direction and opportunity to make a new “first impression” • Take leadership role • Be backbone agency in city • Have engaged participatory and knowledgeable Board • Funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of senior staff • Real/perceived encroachment of other service providers • Shift in poverty population in the City • Lack of constituent engagement (at the Board level)
<p>Other comments/suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish “checklist” against which every grant proposal is judged. • Who do we serve? Are we targeting anyone in particular? • Address causes of poverty not just the symptoms • Find a way to have measurable and sustainable progress. 			

STRATEGIC GOALS:

During the assessment process, the Board of Directors, staff, clients, and other organizations were asked to identify areas of need for low-income residents within the City of Pittsburgh. The issues identified during the assessment phase are shown in Table 6. Following the discussion, Board members had an opportunity to “vote” for the areas that they felt were most important for PCSI to address and that were most in line with the agency’s mission. Each participating Board member was given six dots and instructed to place those dots next to the needs of greatest priority. Each Board Member could place the entire number of dots on one area to give it a greater priority or split the six dots to multiple areas. The ranking was tabulated and discussed and led to the formation of Strategic Goals.

TABLE 6			
List of Poverty Issues identified by Board, Staff, Clients and Other Organizations			
Board	Staff	Clients	Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Service delivery • Workforce development • Affordable housing • Youth programs • Case management • Advocacy • Expansion of programs • Build partnerships • Active Board Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board engagement • Financial Literacy • Workforce development • Education • Case management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Care • Food access • Financial Literacy • Job training • Workforce development • Safety • Affordable housing • Education • Quality day care • Transportation • Case management • Better wages • Recreation choices • Home ownership • Help getting criminal records expunged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Care • Human Service Delivery • Food access • Parenting education • Financial Literacy • Capacity Building • Job training • Workforce development • Safety • Affordable housing • Utility assistance • Education • Access social capital • Violence prevention • Youth programs • Neighborhood ownership • Economic Development • Quality day care • Transportation • Case management • Infant service-health & nutrition • Supportive services single parents • Energy related

The items in bold reflect focus areas mentioned by 10-or-more participants from any of the groups.

Two kinds of information were produced as a result of this activity. Three top domain areas were identified (Housing, Employment, and Food and Nutrition) and six strategic action areas were identified to address the needs in those domain areas, as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7 Recommended Strategic Focus Areas		
Domain Areas That Reached Top Priority		
4. Housing	5. Employment	6. Food and Nutrition

Strategies Areas		
1. Increase Comprehensive Case Management Services	2. Create Structured Advocacy Policies and Practices	3. Build, Expand and Maintain Strategic Partnerships
4. Increase Funding Opportunities	5. Develop Agency Capacity	6. Expand Service Sites and Develop Innovative Projects

The information from the chart above and the information gathered throughout the planning process was translated in to a series of strategic outcomes which PCSI will work toward achieving over the next three year.

PCSI Outcomes and Strategies

2017-2019

Outcome 1: PCSI will fully implement the Community Service Block Grant Organizational Standards.

This will require a total review of organizational policies, bylaws, and practices, and a restructuring of the Board of Directors. Initial work will include the completion of an agency-wide Risk Assessment. Training and building the capacity of both staff and Board should be part of this effort. The national CSBG Organizational Standards are being reviewed by the staff and changes have been proposed to bring the agency into compliance. Training for both Board and staff on Result Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) and quality standards will also be part of this effort. Systems for tracking and reporting outcomes will be reviewed and modified to allow for full tracking of agency results and submission of accurate and timely reports. This will help to strengthen relationships with funding agencies and expand the accountability of the agency.

The changes to the board functioning will include charging the Executive Committee of the Board with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of this plan and reporting progress to the Board of Directors.

Outcome 2: PCSI will achieve greater agency sustainability.

PCSI, as the designated CSBG agency serving the City of Pittsburgh, benefits from the funding of the Community Services Block Grant, which is to be used to leverage other funds to achieve agency sustainability. The national average of Community Action Agencies indicates that for every dollar of CSBG funding the Community Action Agency leverages on average four additional dollars to support agency operations. PCSI's ratio of leveraged funding is less than one dollar to one dollar of CSBG funding. This is far below the leverage ratio for a typical Community Action Agency. Achieving a three-to-one ratio during the planning period would increase the resources of the agency to resolve community problems by over \$2 million. The expansion of resources requires building relationships with funders, engaging and building partnership with other organizations and an expanded focus on resource development. This will require strengthening relationships with existing funding sources and expanding development efforts to generate new funders, providing for an aggressive development of new resources. PCSI will also develop new opportunities allowing for both the expansion of services and locations. Building on new relationships with the foundation community will be critical to

this work. Priority areas for program development and expansion include housing, workforce development, food insecurity, case management, financial literacy, and advocacy. A special focus will be given to development of social enterprise opportunities which in addition to leveraging resources that provide opportunities to create jobs and address other priorities of PCSI.

Outcome 3: PCSI will have greater visibility citywide in matters related to poverty.

While PCSI serves residents throughout the city, its current location was identified in the recent needs assessment as a limitation to access and awareness of agency services. As resources allow, the agency will focus on the geographic expansion of locations to provide greater access to the range of services offered by PCSI. Neighborhood Centers will target neighborhoods with higher concentration of low income residents. The presence will also help to build a closer relationship to neighborhood work and residents, opening doors to new opportunities for service.

Advocacy activities will include a focus on issues of housing, food insecurity, financial needs and employment/workforce development issues of low income households. The Board in conjunction with staff will work to expand advocacy efforts.

Development of partnerships with other organization addressing the problems of poverty in the City will also be part of this effort. A specific effort will focus on bringing new financial resources to community problems.

Outcome 4: The culture of PCSI will be transformed to an improved customer service model with an emphasis on comprehensive case management.

The transition of PCSI from a “silo” structure, which is a program-focused approach, to a customer-focused strategy, dealing with the needs of consumers in a comprehensive manner, will require expanded comprehensive case management services. Low-income families come to the agency usually for a single need, but we know they are often confronted with multiple problems. A comprehensive focus at intake on the full needs of the family will expand the ability of staff to respond by bundling services internally and making appropriate referrals to other service providers equipped to deal with specific needs which PCSI cannot address. Employees will be fully engaged in the success of residents to achieve results necessary to resolve problems.

Integrating case management support throughout services offered by PCSI will strengthen the ability of residents who seek help with the agency to resolve multiple problems and to transition from a crisis situation to more self-sufficient situations. Case managers will transition away from the “silo” model, by assisting residents in a comprehensive manner, successfully moving residents to a positive outcome. Case Managers will also understand the importance of recording outcomes and progress towards outcomes, maintaining a customer focus and remaining fully engaged in the client’s success. They will also recognize the power of partnership with other agencies that are addressing problems faced by clients. Case Managers will be exposed to various approaches through training that emphasizes the family development model, which is a strength-based approach.

PCSI’s data system must be able to track progress and results. The review of existing data collection and processing will be part of this work. Changes in current practices will be made as appropriate to assure the data system is adequate for the new approach, so that the agency can achieve greater accountability to funding sources.

Outcome 5: PCSI customers (and city residents generally) will have increased housing stability

A clear priority identified in the planning process is the problem of housing. Issues of affordability and accessibility were raised by clients, partners, community leaders, and the Board of Directors. Current involvement of PCSI in the housing area is limited to energy assistance, case management, and home safety services.

The new comprehensive case management will include an assessment of housing needs of households and inclusion of goals to assist families to improve their housing situation. The agency will build and expand partnerships with other organizations to address the housing problems of customers and communities.

New opportunities for innovative approaches to solve housing issues will be explored and developed. Some of the ideas identified during the strategic planning process included the creation of a furniture bank, establishment of a housing navigator effort, and expansion of case management services targeted to housing needs. This expanded effort will provide greater assistance to customers with housing instability issues.

Outcome 6: PCSI customers will increase skills and find employment

Many of the residents coming to PCSI for services do not have the skills needed for the existing job market. Many are challenged by barriers such as a criminal history or drug involvement. The lack of a high school diploma and the lack of marketable skills are problems faced by many low-income residents. Expanding the capacity of PCSI to assist local residents in securing living-wage jobs will be a top priority in the coming three-year period. PCSI will create Workforce Development Training Centers (a part of the Neighborhood Centers in Outcome 3, above) located in low-income communities which will provide local residents increased access to training, job search help, employment support, and microbusiness development assistance.

New opportunities for innovative approaches to employment issues will also be developed. For example, the creation of a furniture bank, will provide on-the-job training and will help clients increase skills and get job experience. The new comprehensive case management program will include a greater focus on assisting residents with employment and education issues, helping to transition the households served by PCSI to a stronger pathway toward employment opportunities.

The agency will expand its Work Ready program. By focusing efforts on the strength of participants, eliminating barriers to employment, and encouraging program participants to improve skills, residents will be able to take advantage of opportunities and pursue quality employment.

Outcome 7: PCSI will reduce food insecurity city-wide

Many people in our communities struggle with food insecurity. PCSI will work to expand resources and services and will address problems of food deserts across Pittsburgh. Many organizations are working on food insecurity issues, including: Pittsburgh Food Bank, Neighborhood Allies, Churches, Foundations, and Businesses. Yet, the need for such services remains high. PCSI will therefore work to expand its partnership with the numerous organizations involved in this work. As resources allow PCSI will expand its support of food pantries in challenged neighborhoods around the city. New opportunities for innovation include the creation of community gardens, aquaponics, and other social enterprises; the establishment of summer feeding program sites will reach youth who normally get free lunch during the school year; and the expansion of weekend backpack efforts for school-aged youth. The national focus on Healthy Foods targeted to food deserts, which are typically lower-income neighborhoods, provides an opportunity for attracting resources to respond to local needs.

See attached chart for graphic representation of the connections among the needs, outcomes, strategies, and measures.

PCSI Strategic Plan Outline: 2017 – 2019

What issue will we address?	What changes will we see?	What will be measured?	What will we do?	What has happened?
Need	Objective	Indicators	Services or Strategies	Progress
Board does not currently have processes in place to meet Organizational Standards (Agency need)	PCSI will fully implement the Community Service Block Grant Organizational Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in policies • practices of the board (such as creation of new committees) • bylaws, etc. 	This will require a total review of organizational policies, bylaws, and practices, as well as a restructuring of the Board of Directors. Initial work will include the completion of an agency-wide Risk Assessment. Training and building the capacity of both staff and Board should be part of this effort.	
PCSI’s funding sources are limited in scope and amount (Agency need)	PCSI will achieve greater agency sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or expanded partnerships; • New or expanded funding sources and resources; and • Amount of increase of funding support 	This will require the strengthening of relationships with existing funding sources, expanding development efforts to expand funders and aggressive development of new resources. PCSI will also develop new, innovative opportunities for the expansion of services and locations.	
PCSI is not currently known as the “go-to” agency regarding issues related to poverty, low income communities and individuals with low income. (Agency need)	PCSI will have greater visibility citywide in matters related to poverty.	<p>Involvement in partnerships and coalitions advocating for issues of poverty and needs of low-income communities is central to this work.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of program sites • Solutions proposed to policy-makers. • Reports or white papers issued. • Communication to communities detailing issues and actions needed. 	As resources allow, the agency will focus on the geographic expansion of locations to provide greater access to the range of services offered by PCSI. Advocacy activities will include a focus on issues of housing, food insecurity, financial needs and employment/workforce development issues of low income households.	

<p>PCSI currently provides case management services which is an important part of the work of the agency. Resources limit the extent of case management services available to customer and needs expanded. Additionally, maintaining accountability by fully tracking services and outcomes to report to funding agencies is important.</p>	<p>The culture of PCSI will be transformed to an improved customer service model with an emphasis on comprehensive case management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of individuals and families receiving comprehensive case management and the number of these who achieve outcomes • Documented use of appropriate data tracking system 	<p>Expanded comprehensive case management services.</p> <p>Integrating case management support throughout services offered by PCSI.</p> <p>Changes in current practices will be made as appropriate to assure the data system is adequate for the new approach.</p>	
<p>Individuals and families in Pittsburgh need accessible and affordable housing (Family need)</p>	<p>PCSI customers (or residents city wide) will have increased housing stability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new and expand partnerships with other organizations to address the housing problems. • Number and description of new initiatives. • Number of individuals and families served and the number of those who report increased housing stability. 	<p>Assessment of housing needs of households, inclusion of goals to assist families to improve their housing situation.</p> <p>New opportunities for innovative approaches to housing issues.</p> <p>Some of the ideas: creation of a furniture bank, establishment of a housing navigator effort and expansion of case management.</p>	

<p>Individuals and families seeking employment do not have the skills needed for the existing job market; many are challenged by barriers (criminal record, etc.) (Family need)</p>	<p>PCSI customers will increase skills and find employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new and expand partnership with other organizations to address the housing problems. • Number and description of new initiatives. • Number of individuals and families served and the number of those who report increased housing stability. 	<p>Assist residents with employment and education issues; Focus efforts on the strength of participants, elimination of barriers to employment and encouraging program participants to improve skills.</p> <p>Expand Work Ready program.</p> <p>Develop new opportunities for innovative approaches to housing issues.</p>	
<p>There are insufficient resources in the city for those suffering from food insecurity; and where resources are available they are not coordinated to achieve maximum impact (Community need)</p>	<p>PCSI will reduce food insecurity in Pittsburgh.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new initiatives developed or joined. • Number of individuals and families who participate in programs, and of those the number who report increased food security. 	<p>Expand resources and services, and attract opportunities to address problems of food deserts city-wide.</p> <p>Some ideas for innovative approaches: creation of community gardens, aquaponics, and other social enterprises; the establishment of summer feeding program sites; expansion the weekend backpack program; and nutrition education programs for seniors.</p>	