

FY 2021-2023 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The Community Council of South Central Texas, Inc. (CCSCT) is part of the Community Action Network comprised of approximately 1000 non-profit and public organizations established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The primary purpose of these Agencies is to wage the fight in America's War on Poverty. Community Action Agencies are the primary source of support for the millions of American's living in poverty. These organizations reach out to low-income families and individuals in their communities, address multiple needs through a comprehensive approach, develop partnerships with other organizations, involve low-income clients in Agency operations, and administer a full range of coordinated programs designed to have a measurable impact on poverty. The Community Action Network's ultimate goal is to help people to help themselves in achieving self-sufficiency.

CCSCT began providing a broad range of programs on May 11, 1965. CCSCT currently provides services in 23 counties in South Central and Southwest Texas. Services currently provided include the following:

- Case Management through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG);
- Energy Assistance through the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP);
- Making homes more energy efficient through the Weatherization Assistance Program, including Low-Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Department of Energy (DOE) and the American Electric Power Weatherization Program (AEP);
- Healthy nutrition assistance through Women, Infants, and Children (WIC);
- Home Investment Partnerships Programs (HOME) through Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA).
- Early Head Start and Head Start services.

CCSCT's Strategic Plan serves as a guide to fulfilling the agency's mission and holding staff accountable for reaching the agency's long-term goals.

The Strategic Plan was developed from CCSCT's 2021 Community Needs Assessment. This needs assessment includes county statistics, client and stakeholder input obtained through surveys, interviews and community forums, and an extensive data analysis, which identified the following top five needs for our service area:

- Safe and affordable Housing (individual/family need)
- Child care/Head Start (individual/family need)
- Food/Nutrition Assistance (individual/family need)
- Energy efficient homes (individual/family need)
- Access to living wage jobs (individual/family need)

Once the Strategic Plan has been completed, the goals identified in the plan are then used to develop the Community Action Plan.

CCSCT also complies with the CSBG Organizational Standards for Private Entities, and by agreeing to exceed those standards, the Agency is a participant in the distinguished and nationally recognized Community Action Partnership (CAP) Pathways to Excellence in Community Action Project.

The CCSCT Strategic Plan is a working document built with input from staff, Board Members, key informants, resources, and conditions. The Board's Strategic Planning Committee and appointed staff will continually monitor the Agency's position in relationship to the Strategic Plan using strong ROMA practices and the use of the complete ROMA Cycle.

Purpose, Process, and Stakeholder Participation

CCSCT formed a Strategic Planning Committee consisting of six Board appointed Board Members, the Executive Director and the CCSCT Management Team, which includes the Controller, Human Resources Director, Community Services Program Director, Weatherization Coordinator, WIC Program Director, Head Start Program Director, CS Program & Compliance Manager, Marketing & Communications Manager and Grant Writer.

The committee reviewed the 2021-2023 Strategic Plan and the Agency's mission and vision statements as a starting point in the process. The Committee identified the goals and objectives that had been successfully met and those goals where additional progress was necessary.

The Committee then used guidelines for developing a Strategic Plan as written in Category 4 Standard 4.3 and 4.5, along with Category 6 Standards 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 of the CSBG Organizational Standards for Community Action Agencies. The committee included The Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Cycle and Category 2, Strategic Planning and Direction Overview from the Community Action Partnership Pathways to Excellence in Community Action Standards. Lastly, the Committee used information from the Strategic Planning Guide for Texas Community Action Agencies released by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

The Strategic Plan addresses CCSCT's agency wide goals for the next three years, along with specified objectives, strategies and desired outcomes. It also breaks down each goal into family, agency, or community, while incorporating the national Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) goals and the Community Action goals identified in the National Community Action Network Theory of Change, both literally and/or representatively, depending on the goal.

Goals within the Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and an update on the progress of meeting the goals of the plan will be provided to the Board of Directors annually. Also, an analysis of the Agency's outcomes and any operational or Strategic program adjustments and improvement will also go to the Board annually for review or action.

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission Statement

CCSCT empowers vulnerable families and individuals in greater South Central Texas to achieve self-sufficiency by eliminating barriers through innovative programs and strong community partnerships.

Vision Statement

Helping People. Changing Lives.

Values

Integrity. We remain true to our mission, expect honesty among our staff, Board and the clients we serve and believe our actions help maintain the trust and confidence of the public.

Respect. We believe in treating others with dignity and respect, embrace the diversity of others and encourage staff to work together as a team.

Community Awareness. We believe in collaborating with other organizations throughout the community in an effort to complement existing resources to meet the needs of our clients, while also maximizing the support of our donors.

Empowerment. We believe in empowering our clients to become self-sufficient in order to live a better life, as well as empowering our employees to succeed in a culture based on trust, respect and commitment.

Responsibility, Accountability and Ethics. We take responsibility for achieving results and hold ourselves accountable for our actions. We strive to uphold the highest ethical standards and comply with all federal, state and local laws.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Agency employs staff	Agency remains	Availability of grant	Minimal access to no-
with diverse	competitive with	funding through	cost/free print
backgrounds, talent and	regards to pay and	multiple sources to	advertising in order to
expertise.	benefits for staff.	expand services: local,	communicate general
		state, federal and	information about the
Agency has a wide	Agency has minimal	foundation.	agency or its services to
offering of agency	on-site supervision at		clients.
programs and services.	its remote offices, so	Availability of funding	
	there is a greater need	designated for crisis	Developments in
Agency has a full-time	to hire staff who can be	response related to	technology may change
grant writer who is able	relied upon to work	natural disasters or	this market beyond our
to research new and	independently.	health crisis.	ability to adapt.
innovative grants and			
has secured several	Vulnerability of vital	Crisis will create more	A change in the
additional opportunities	staff being sick, or not	of a need for funding	government grant
to expand services	available for any	and service delivery.	availability or the
within the past 3 years.	extended length of		manner in which they
	time; staff turnover.	Our competitors may	are distributed or issued
Agency has implemented		be slow to adopt new	[i.e. re-competition for
a Marketing &	Agency's cash flow for	technologies.	Head Start].
Communications	some programs can be		
Manager position to	unreliable at times,	Developments in	Lack of support from
increase awareness in	which can be an issue	technology may	local government and
communities we serve.	for reimbursable	change the methods	city officials.
	programs, where we	for providing services	
Agency has several	have to use line of	to clients-our ability	Gaining fundraising
remote offices located in	credit or non-federal	to adapt quickly to	support from local
rural communities to	funds to cover the cost.	these changes.	businesses.
better serve clients		_	
locally and in more rural	Agency lacks	Capitalizing on	Vulnerability to
areas.	unrestricted resources	platforms dedicated	economic crises.
	as a result of the lack	to establishing a	
Agency has developed	of fundraising	donor base, as well as	Unpredictable
many strong community	activities and	use of other tools.	government regulations
partnerships-currently	donations.	·	that can be difficult to
over 200 in place	A 1 1 1	Increasing	immediately adapt to
	Agency has a limited	engagement and	once enforced.
Agency is recognized as	number of developed	involvement from	
a national partner of the	relationships with	Board members and	Competition from other
Community Action	local, state and federal	community partners.	nonprofit organizations
Network.			

	leaders, due to a	Increasing technology	working for the same
Agency is designated as	revolving door.	that allows us to	purpose.
a low-risk auditee for its		increase mediums of	
single-audit.		communication with	Legislator's
		clients, Board	unwillingness to
Several staff have		members, general	continue levels of
obtained nationally		public and partners.	funding for programs
recognized certification			(i.e. Community Services
in ROMA, CCAP and case		Networks and	Block Grant).
management.		associations allow for	
		opportunities to learn	Limited availability of a
Agency has earned		from peers.	qualified and motivated
platinum status with			workforce.
Guidestar.		Maximizing resources	
		in each local	
Agency has long		community would	
standing presence in the		provide countless	
community it serves-		opportunities for	
over 50 years in most		clients.	
counties.			
Agency has capacity to			
provide remote services			
in times of crisis,			
pandemic or natural			
disaster.			
A			
Agency has earned the			
respect of CAA network			
and its funding sources.			

Goals, Objectives and Strategies



Marketing and Visibility

Goal #1: CCSCT is recognized and respected as THE provider of services for low-income residents in the 23-county service area (Agency, Community)

Objective	Strategies	Desired Outcome(s)
Increase CCSCT's brand and community awareness.	 Increase social media presence. Increase community outreach activities throughout service area. Conduct annual meetings with elected officials to inform them of CCSCT services. Encourage staff to join civic organizations and Boards. 	 Social media presence (as indicated by increased number of followers and engagement in posts) will increase. The number of individuals familiar with CCSCT's mission and programs will increase. Metrics: Increase in followers across all social media platforms (follows and engagements) # of agency website views # of outreach activities conducted # of meetings held with elected officials % of clients who responded strongly agree/agree to "I would recommend CCSCT to family/friends".
2. Project value of agency mission and services to community and ensure outcomes and results are communicated to the stakeholders.	 Develop an agency-wide communication plan. Develop and release an Annual Report. Post important documents such as Strategic Plan, Needs Assessment and Annual Report to agency website. Increase submissions local media reporting. Share more client success stories on social media platforms and website. 	 Agency activities, outcomes and results will be regularly communicated to stakeholders using developed communication tools. Strategic Plan, Needs Assessment and Annual Report will be posted and accessible on agency website. Number of media submissions will increase (i.e. articles, PSAs). Number of client stories.

	Metrics:
	# of PSAs distributed# of website posts# of FB posts

Organizational Leadership & Capacity

Goal #2: CCSCT promotes effective and qualified leadership and continually strives for operational excellence. (Agency)

Objective	Strategies	Desired Outcome(s)
1. Regularly assess the effectiveness of the Boar and its activities.	 Develop a Board self-assessment tool. Distribute annual Board self-assessment survey (January meeting). Compile and analyze data to identify strengths and weaknesses of Board. 	 The Board will assess itself annually to determine its effectiveness and areas of opportunity will be identified and acted upon. Metrics: # and % of Board Assessments completed each year
2. Provide opportunities fo staff to enroll in and receive CCAP, NCRI and case management certifications.	 Identify and nominate staff to participate in CCAP and NCRI certification programs. Have existing staff who have obtained certifications provide support and mentorship to enrolled staff if applicable. 	 Additional CCSCT staff will earn their CCAP and NCRI certifications. Metrics: # of CCAP staff # of NCRI staff # certified case managers
3. Provide on-going trainin to staff to improve skills and capacity.	 Identify anticipated training needs of staff. Conduct an all-day training annually to train on identified topics. Document trainings and obtain feedback regarding effectiveness of training. Provide opportunities for staff to attend state, regional and national conferences (TACAA, Region VI, CAP Conference, WIPFLI, ROMA, etc.) 	 Ongoing training will be provided to staff on an annual basis. Staff will attend local, regional and national conferences. Metrics: # and % of training surveys completed % of employees who responded strongly agree/agree to "I feel I

	Provide a once a month training with management/leadership team on applicable topics to strengthen leadership capacity/skills.	have received adequate training to do my job well". Wo femployees who responded strongly agree/agree to "There are adequate resources and support to help me in my job". Go femployees who responded strongly agree/agree to "Employees are expected and encouraged to see out opportunities to better themselves". Hof staff training hours Hamagement trainings Hof staff trainings Hof conferences attended
4. Improve internal staff communication.	 Conduct monthly staff meetings. Remain transparent with staff regarding organizational changes and explain why they occurred. Utilize internal Sharepoint site to post updated forms and agency documents (i.e. Strategic Plan, CNA, CAP Plan, Mission, Vision, Values, ROMA Cycle). Send emails to staff when there are updates to programs, agency operations and other critical information. Develop a system for staff to provide feedback anonymously. 	 Lines of communication with staff will be improved and staff will feel they are more informed of what is going on in the agency. Metrics: % of employees who responded strongly agree/agree to "The company does a good job of keeping employees informed". % of employees who responded strongly agree/agree to "I receive meaningful/important information from the ED, HR Director and my Program Director". # of staff meetings conducted # anonymous submissions
5. Work towards obtaining the Award of Excellence.	 Implement recommendations provided in Pathways feedback report. Assess progress towards meeting standards annually. 	The Award of Excellence will be obtained.

6.	Improve Board recruitment and involvement.	 Complete new self-study and apply for Award of Excellence. Schedule regular meetings with the Governance Committee. Establish Board recruitment process. Develop criteria for Board selection. Capitalize on existing Board relationships to identify potential Board candidates. 	 Board recruitment and involvement will increase. Metrics: % Board turnover # Governance Committee meetings # Board volunteer hours # Board training hours Average # years tenure of Board Members % Board members participating in Board committees
7.	Improve employee engagement and recognition.	 Establish an employee engagement committee. Identify ways to recognize staff. Highlight one employee per month. Utilize Administrative Professionals, Boss's Day and other related days for recognition. 	 Employee engagement and recognition will improve. Metrics: % employee satisfaction % employees who responded strongly agree or agree to "I feel my supervisor values the work I do". % employee who responded strongly agree or agree to "Individuals are recognized for their contributions to improving how we work".

Program Initiatives

Goal #3: CCSCT's programs focus on the needs of the community as identified in the Community Needs Assessment and are aligned with its mission and vision. (Agency, Family)

Objective		Strategies		De	Desired Outcome(s)	
1.	Ensure individual	•	Ensure identified	•	Individual programs will	
	programs contribute to		programs and services are		contribute to the stability	
	the stability of individuals,		aligned with mission and		of individuals, family and	
	family and community and		vision of reducing poverty		community and will	
	address top needs as		and helping people		address the top needs of	
	identified in the CNA.		become self-sufficient.		its population as identified	
					in the CNA.	

	 Implement ROMA logic models to address top needs. Continually evaluate customer input from needs assessment and surveys to identify gaps in service and make appropriate improvements. Develop partnerships with other organizations in the community to ensure needs are met. Provide referrals Apply for additional grant opportunities to fill needed gaps. 	 CCSCT will offer more programs that align directly with the top needs identified. Metrics: # of program logic models in place # of established partnerships # of referrals # of new programs/grants
2. Improve Self-Sufficiency Program to achieve greater results for clients and the community.	 Provide opportunities for case management training to case managers to provide skills to achieve Self-Sufficiency Program goals and implement continual improvements to the program. Encourage more staff to enroll in and earn case manager certification. Hire Self-Sufficiency Manager to oversee the enrollment and transition of TOP clients; in addition to training staff on case management practices 	 The Self-Sufficiency Program success rate with increase. The number of individuals who transition out of poverty will increase. The number of certified case managers will increase. Metrics: # TOP clients # case management clients enrolled % case management TOP rate (FNPI 1c)
3. Enhance programs to fill in gaps highlighted in the CNA.	 Review CNA to identify top needs, then identify whether or not CCSCT has a program to support that need. Short-term, identify resources in the community to refer clients to in order to receive services. Long-term, seek out and apply for grant opportunities to obtain funding to operate programs to fill in gaps. 	 Programs will be enhanced and will fill in gaps highlighted in the CNA. Metrics: # of new partnerships # of new funding opportunities applied to # of newly implemented programs

4.	Address areas of opportunity identified in the analysis of client satisfaction data in order to improve customer service.	 Implement systematic client survey schedule. Make surveys accessible to clients through a number of avenues (paper, electronic). Evaluate customer service results annually to identify ways to improve service and incorporate that into the Strategic Planning process. Track results and report to staff and Board. Provide ongoing training to staff on ways to improve customer service. 	 Customer satisfaction ratings will be 90% or better for all programs. Metrics: % of customer satisfaction surveys completed % of customers who responded strongly agree/agree to "I was satisfied with my overall experience and the services I received". % of customers who responded strongly agree/agree to "I am likely to use the program service(s) again".
5.	Ensure projects are aligned with agency mission and vision.	 Implement an agency-wide project management policy, with procedures for identifying and taking on a new project. Implement the use of a Request for Special Project form for project approval. 	 Projects will be aligned with the agency mission and vision. Metrics: # of special projects

Partnerships and Community Engagement

Goal #4: CCSCT engages and collaborates with the community. (Community, Agency)

Objective	Strategies	Outcome
Foster strong and intentional partnerships with the shared goal of creating change.	 Develop a master inventory of partner organizations and their services and update annually. Participate in partner activities in the community. Develop a partner survey to solicit feedback and assess partnership benefits. 	 Agency partnerships will increase. Partner satisfaction ratings will be 90% or better. Metrics: # of partnerships % of partner surveys completed % of partners who responded strongly

		agree/agree to "I am likely to continue a partnership with CCSCT". • % of partners who responded strongly agree/agree to "I would recommend CCSCT to friends/family and/or recommend other organizations partner with them".
2. Re-establish external advisory council.	 Re-identify a formal method for identifying individuals to serve on external advisory council and ensure representation from counties not represented on the Board. 	 External advisory council will be re-established. Metrics: # of advisory council meetings
3. Increase advocacy for low-income individuals and families.	 Develop advocacy plan (including the development of a survey to assess advocacy efforts). Deliver presentations to key decision makers regarding services for lowincome families (to also increase awareness of unmet needs, gaps in service delivery and barriers to obtaining services). Allocate monies in the agency-wide budget for addressing advocacy activities each year (i.e. outreach). 	 Advocacy activities will increase and key decision makers will be more informed about CCSCT, its services and the needs of individuals throughout their communities. Metrics: # of presentations made to key decision makers # of advocacy activities conducted Average # of attendees at advocacy activities
4. Enhance level of community involvement.	 Review community calendars for service area Attend at least 1 community event per year Attend Job Fairs Attend Chamber of Commerce meetings Post CCSCT events on webpage and encourage/invite general public to attend. 	 Community involvement will be enhanced. Metrics: # of job fairs, chamber events, community events attended (evaluated over prior year) # of agency events posted on agency website

Sustainability

Goal #5: CCSCT has diverse revenue sources and the financial strength and capacity to support future growth. (Community, Agency)

Objective	Strategies	Outcome
1. Increase non-federal funds.	 Develop a fundraising plan (Fundraising Committee). Conduct at least one fundraiser per year. Engage Board members and staff to take an active role in fundraising activities. 	 Non-federal funds will increase. Metrics: % increase in non-federal funds raised over prior year # of fundraisers conducted
2. Identify new grant opportunities.	 Research potential funding opportunities based on identified top needs in the community assessment. Ensure grant opportunities align with agency mission. Evaluate the value of new grant opportunities before applying. 	 New grant opportunities will be identified and programs and services will be expanded. Metrics: # of new funding opportunities applied to % increase in revenue
3. Develop a donor base.	 Compile a list of current and former donors. Establish donor platform to track and manage donors. Create multiple opportunities for donors to give. Improve opportunities to access donor link on website and Facebook page. Evaluate effectiveness of mail appeals. Publicize new giving opportunities. 	 A donor base will be established and expanded upon each year to assist in generating agency revenue. Metrics: # of clicks on DONATE button(s)-FB and website # repeat donors # total donors