



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

Adopted
December 14, 2016

MESSAGE FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

November 2016

Every five years—for at least the last two decades—the Council for Court Excellence has engaged in a long-range planning exercise to determine the breadth of our next reform agenda. We have conducted survey research, compiled interview data, and convened a broad range of board directors and stakeholders to discuss the substantive projects we might undertake to improve the District of Columbia’s justice system. We have also, on occasion, addressed our financial challenges in an effort to agree affirmatively on belt-tightening policies and growing or shrinking our staff, among other responses to fiscal challenges. A financial retreat was certainly the priority in 2004 with a new incoming executive director, and then again in 2008, on the brink of a major recession.

With our existing 2011-2016 long-range plan set to end in December, the Council’s leadership last fall determined that the development of a more comprehensive, organizational strategic plan was not only warranted, but necessary in light of our current executive director’s planned departure in 2017. Indeed, the strategic plan that you are about to read has been the perfect opportunity to review, redefine, reassess, and in some cases reaffirm what CCE is about, with a focus on what we should do (the substance), who does it (the board, the staff, our stakeholders), and how to achieve greater quality, sustainability, and transparency.

Developing this strategic plan was a comprehensive and collaborative experience. To begin, CCE obtained funding and hired a superb strategic planner, Jen Lachman of Lachman Consulting. A strategic planning committee was convened, which we were asked to co-chair, that included a cross-section of the CCE board, diverse in terms of demographics, familiarity with the organization, and background. The 30-person committee, including all CCE staff, met monthly between March and October, along with dividing itself into working groups that focused on CCE’s programs, board composition and structure, fundraising and communications, and its upcoming leadership succession. CCE staff provided significant input throughout this process. Finally, the committee’s progress was reported regularly to the executive committee and to the board of directors at the June meeting to ensure a high level of transparency and accountability.

The strategic direction CCE will take, as outlined in this plan, is clarified through an aspirational vision statement and a redefined mission statement. We began by asking and answering a series of questions: How will the justice system in DC be different in five years as a result of CCE’s success? What will be the single best measure of our success? How does CCE need to look different internally to achieve our vision? How will we communicate our mission and impact? What will remain unchanged about CCE? By exploring these questions, we became more deeply grounded in our vision for a justice system in the District of Columbia that equitably serves its people, and we became more strongly aligned around the unique role CCE plays to identify and implement lasting improvements by collaborating with diverse stakeholders to conduct research, advance policy, educate the public, and increase civic engagement.

The committee spent significant time examining CCE’s geographic direction, in terms of remaining DC-focused vs. regional, vs. national. The consensus we reached is to remain a DC-focused organization, adding a regional layer if and when the issue or problem in question

warrants a broader geographic approach. It was also agreed that CCE will make every effort to impact justice systems at a national level by promoting its work among justice organizations throughout the country.

The plan sets forth five strategic priorities with specific goals to guide their future implementation. Under the first priority, the committee proposes that three of the four standing program committees be renamed to emphasize that CCE's work extends beyond the courts to the entire justice system, and that each committee create a five-year program plan. Given this wider focus on the District's entire justice system, rather than only its courts, the strategic planning committee recommends that the organization undergo a rebranding effort so that its name reflects this extended focus.

The second priority, to diversify and grow CCE's funding streams, focuses on ways to expand our fundraising efforts, including growing our fee-for-service work and increasing revenue from events and individual donors. These goals are closely linked to the third priority, to increase our visibility through branding, improving how we measure outcomes and impact of our work, and our communications efforts in general.

Priority four relates to the CCE board of directors, and focuses on specific ways to increase our board diversity and engagement in order to capitalize on our robust pool of talent that has made this organization so unique and productive.

The fifth priority area covers succession planning both in regard to the 2017 departure of CCE's executive director and the creation of a succession plan for future leadership transitions.

CCE's strategic plan concludes with a section on strategic adaptability, developed through the committee's discussions about the need for greater transparency in how we monitor progress and make decisions about project opportunities or organizational challenges. The five strategic criteria described in this section will act as a guiding framework to support us in making the right choices for CCE and the communities we serve.

This strategic plan will be presented to the CCE board of directors at its December 14, 2016, meeting for a formal vote. A series of implementation efforts, reflecting the plan's priorities and goals, will begin in early 2017 and will be refined—and reported on—throughout the life of the plan.

We acknowledge and thank the members of the strategic planning committee, listed below, who participated in this exceptional process. We are also grateful to Goodwin Procter LLP, Hollingsworth LLP, and Sidley Austin LLP for their generosity in hosting the committee's meetings. Finally, we acknowledge and thank our consultant Jen Lachman, whose skilled leadership propelled us from her very first question: What would it take to develop a shared picture of CCE's future vision and translate that vision into a blueprint for the next five years and beyond?

Sincerely,

Cary Feldman and Cynthia Wright
CCE Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chairs

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STRATEGIC PLAN, 2017-2021

CCE's VISION

The Council for Court Excellence envisions a justice system in the District of Columbia that equitably serves its people and continues to be a model for creating stronger and more prosperous communities.

CCE's MISSION

The Council for Court Excellence's mission is to enhance the justice system in the District of Columbia to serve the public equitably. CCE identifies and proposes solutions by collaborating with diverse stakeholders to conduct research, advance policy, educate the public, and increase civic engagement.

CCE will enhance the justice system in the District of Columbia by focusing on the following strategic priorities in 2017-2021:

PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 4	PRIORITY 5
<p>Strengthen the impact of CCE's initiatives through strategic focus on our four program areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Civil Justice ➤ Criminal Justice ➤ Youth Justice ➤ Justice Education 	<p>Diversify and grow funding streams, so that CCE becomes more financially secure and sustainable.</p>	<p>Increase CCE's visibility and become more widely recognized as the go-to organization for justice policy issues in the District of Columbia.</p>	<p>Diversify board recruitment, engage current board directors, and cultivate new board leaders, so that CCE continues to capitalize on its robust pool of talented leadership.</p>	<p>Ensure an orderly, smooth leadership transition in 2017 and prepare CCE for any future leadership transitions.</p>