



**BIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR
2022-2023**



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A Message from the Administrator

I am pleased to present FCERA's Biennial 2022-2023 Strategic Plan. The plan states FCERA's intention to achieve identified goals within the next one to five years.

This plan is a little different in format compared to prior plans. Significant initiatives have been divided into five major categories to better align with FCERA's Strategic Planning Policy. These categories include Investments and Funding, Member Services and Administration, Human Resources, Systems and Operations, and Governance and Public Relations. Individual goals have been broken down and presented under each of these categories.

This new format aligns with Board policy and is easier to follow. As in the past, progress towards these initiatives will be reported to the Board, during a publicly agendized Board meeting, on a quarterly basis.



Respectfully submitted,

Donald C. Kendig, CPA
Retirement Administrator



Strategic Planning Process - Mission, Vision, and Values

MISSION

A mission statement explains an organization's reason for existence and who it serves. It describes the organization's purpose and overall intention. The mission statement supports the vision and serves to communicate purpose and direction to employees and other stakeholders. FCERA's Mission:

To provide secure retirement benefits to our members and beneficiaries while investing the assets of the plan within prudent levels of risk.

VISION

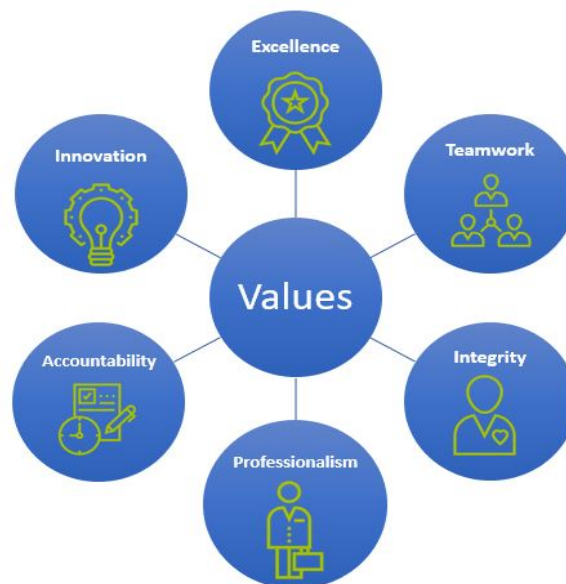
A vision statement is important to help an organization navigate when thinking about the future.

FCERA's Vision:

A trusted and stable partner in the financial security of FCERA's sponsors, members, and beneficiaries

VALUES

Values are the core principles that guide and direct the organization and its culture. In a values-led organization, the values create the moral compass for the organization and its employees. The values guide the decision-making process and establishes a standard against which actions can be assessed. These core values are an internalized framework that is shared and acted on by leadership.





STAKEHOLDERS

Active Members	Beneficiaries	Trustees & Staff
Retiree Members	Plan Sponsors	Service Providers
Deferred Members	Taxpayers-Public	Pension Community

Current State Analysis

The Current State Analysis reviews factors impacting FCERA – either positive or negative, internal or external. It is an exercise to consider all assets and opportunities and identify gaps or vulnerabilities that could impede FCERA’s success. While we cannot foresee every issue or predict the future with any certainty, the Current State Analysis is a useful tool to consider the operating environment that can affect the success of FCERA’s efforts.

The following summary is based on input from FCERA staff, management and the Board of Retirement.

After gathering data from management and staff, staff’s concerns were employee retention, employee training, system upgrades, and continuing outreach and education with our membership. Staff thought FCERA does well in customer service, being efficient with processes and employee appreciation. After discussions with the Board of Retirement at the offsite meeting, the board’s concerns for the future dealt with investment beliefs and portfolio risk management.

The 2022-23 Biennial Strategic Plan is organized differently from the previous plan as initiatives have been divided into five major categories. The categories have been divided into the following:

1. Investments and Funding
2. Member Services and Administration
3. Human Resources
4. Systems and Operations
5. Governance and Public Relations



Strategic Plan Categories

#1 Investment and Funding

Background

At the 2021 Board Educational Offsite meeting, the Board had discussions about FCERA's future goals for the upcoming years, including market volatility, pension benefit costs, fund stability and the impact of a maturing plan. The goal is to maintain and strengthen the long-term stability of the pension fund. With experience in the volatile market during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, preparing FCERA for any new or additional threats can be vital in the stability and the sustainability in the pension plan for all members.

Objectives

- I. Stability of investment earnings
- II. Fuded status of 100%

Action Plan and Deliverables

1. Develop and finalize investment beliefs with the Board of Retirement
2. Study asset allocation options and select the one that provides the best balance of risk and return.
3. Explore and learn about portfolio risk management

#2 Member Services and Administration

Background

Communication and interaction are vital to an organization as much as communication with members, stakeholders, plan sponsors, and others. Valuing teamwork can help improve morale, build trust, enhance relationships, and provide greater flexibility within the organization. During the development of the 2022-2023 Biennial Strategic Plan, as part of FCERA's commitment to communication and member service, FCERA focused on the continuation of internal and external training opportunities to improve staff training and member education. The continued goal from the previous strategic plan is to help ensure the membership has the tools to effectively understand the retirement process. Continuing to enhance stakeholder education is vital to FCERA's success. The COVID-19 pandemic has made FCERA evaluate the current outreach and enhancing options for the members going forward into the future.

Objectives

- I. Develop consistent training materials for staff and members
- II. Identify programs that will enhance skills and advance development of staff
- III. Promote an organizational culture that values teamwork and communication



Action Plan and Deliverables

1. Identify educational opportunities (internal and external) for staff.
 - a. Continuing educational opportunities will help staff enhance their skills to their position or a future potential promotion. FCERA will look into providing more internal and external training opportunities for staff annually.
2. Continue to enhance stakeholder education and communications opportunities through department outreach and online content.
 - a. In 2020 FCERA implemented various webinars for member outreach to aid membership throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. With the success and feedback FCERA has received regarding the online content, more online content in forms such as webinars, and short videos will be created to help assist the membership.
 - b. FCERA implemented specialized department and plan sponsor seminars to increase public outreach. FCERA will look to increase stakeholder education by not only enhancing department outreach but plan sponsor outreach.
3. Develop and standardize a FCERA style guide to help further present the FCERA brand in a consistent way.
4. Enhance intra-agency communication between and within FCERA units.
 - a. Enhancing intra-agency communication will help the organization's effectiveness by ensuring there are no gaps between functional areas as well as protect against the loss of institutional knowledge when turnover takes place.
 - b. Study the efficacy of establishing lead positions for each unit to determine if the possible career path concept would fit in an agency of FCERA's size and would lead to increased competency, productivity and retention.

#3 Human Resources

Background

Human resources play a key role in developing, reinforcing and changing the culture of an organization. Pay, performance management, training and development of staff, recruitment, onboarding and retention, and reinforcing the values of FCERA are all essential elements of Human Resources. For several years, FCERA suffered considerable turnover and vacancies which resulted in staffing shortages and backlog of work. With the 2022-23 Biennial Strategic Plan, FCERA is focused on conducting an industry specific salary study by an external compensation review firm, providing opportunities for employee retention, and increasing staff cross-training.

Objectives

- I. Examine and investigate salaries of staff comparable with other public pension plan agencies
- II. Reduce employee turnover and improve employee retention
- III. Enhance cross-training for staff



Action Plan and Deliverables

1. Conduct a salary analysis for staff positions (excluding executive staff) as compared to other retirement agencies.
2. Research, and create opportunities for employee retention.
3. Enhance cross-training for staff to prepare for lateral movement, promotion, and succession planning.
 - a. Staff should be cross-trained with another role, unit or section. This will not only help prepare staff for potential promotional opportunities but to also prepare for any vacancies that may occur at FCERA.

#4 Systems and Operations

Background

FCERA is committed to being a member-oriented organization. One of the ways to provide quality member service is to ensure FCERA has the necessary software and systems to perform daily tasks. As technology advances each day, there is an ongoing need to ensure that staff members have the best tools to be efficient and productive in their work and service to the membership. With the ever-changing world of technology, an organization must keep up with technological advances to ensure long term success.

Objectives

1. Remain current with upgrades of FCERA pension, accounting, and other software
2. Optimize FCERA accounting functions

Action Plan and Deliverables

1. Research and investigate the implementation and upgrade to Arrivos 2.0 and discontinue OnBase.
 - a. Upgrading Arrivos to Tegrity 2.0 will provide new functionality that will help staff be more efficient. The new platform will provide more customizable workflows and allow staff to make changes more easily. The integration of Tegrity 2.0 would also allow the migration of our current Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) software from OnBase, to Tegrity's integrated software. This would resolve compatibility issues and manual corrections.
2. Replace FCERA's Accounting/Financial Reporting System.
 - a. Currently FCERA uses the Microsoft Dynamics, NAV, system for accounting and financial reporting. While functional at present, it requires entries into the County's PeopleSoft accounting system and manual reconciliation. FCERA will investigate and replace the current accounting system with a system that does not require manual reconciliation and would accommodate internal Accounts Payable bill payments, ACH, and wire transfers.



3. Investigate internalizing accounting activities.
 - a. Currently FCERA utilizes the county system for accounting processes. FCERA will investigate and review the process of bringing in the Accounts Payable process. With the plan of upgrading FCERA's current accounting system, internalizing the Accounts Payable process would eliminate double entry from the County's system into FCERA's system resulting in a more efficient process and eliminating potential errors.

#5 Governance and Public Relations

Background

FCERA strives to serve its membership and provide important information through many public channels. Currently FCERA publishes a quarterly newsletter that is mailed out to all deferred and retired members while active employees receive their newsletter through their employer email. These newsletters provide current quarterly information to all members. With new advancements in technology, more retirement associations are utilizing digital distribution of their newsletters and other informational literature. Implementing this strategy would provide a more efficient way to get to members current information along with being environmentally friendly.

Training is not only useful internally for staff but for FCERA's plan sponsors as well. Continuing and enhancing communication and training with FCERA plan sponsors is vital for the organization's success.

Objectives

1. Enhanced public relations and information distribution
2. Training materials for plan sponsors providing for a consistent message and knowledge base

Action Plan and Deliverables

1. Develop a plan to move the FCERA quarterly newsletter to electronic mailing.
 - a. Moving the newsletter to an electronic format would help the organization by providing a more up to date delivery process. Members have been requesting to receive the quarterly newsletter by email for some time and this would create a more efficient way to get the membership the information. FCERA would realize savings on postage and printing costs that have been increasing each quarter with the need for more newsletters with the growing membership along with overhead costs increasing. Members who would like to receive a hard copy of the newsletter would still be able to make a request to receive it by mail. (Actual readership for the cost is unknown.)
 - b. Currently the newsletter is published quarterly for all members. FCERA will research if this format is still beneficial for the membership. Different information may be more relevant to active members verses retired members. Staff will analyze what information might be useful to each category of membership and the desired frequency of each newsletter.



2. Enhancing public outreach with plan sponsors
 - a. Provide the staff of plan sponsors with targeted training on contribution calculations, reporting requirements, and pensionable pay determinations to ensure that our plan sponsors understand the financial processes required for accurate and legally compliant payroll reporting.
 - b. Communicate with plan sponsors regarding an annual educational outreach training session about their retirement benefits.