Center for Modern Aging Princeton

Strategic Plan FY23 - 27

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

May 17, 2022

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Key Learning from the Planning Process

To support its efforts to expand its service to the community, Princeton Senior Resource Center (PSRC) engaged Creative Capacity, LLC to facilitate a strategic planning process. Creative Capacity staff conducted research to inform board and staff decision-making, including an internal survey of all Trustees and staff members, a market scan of senior centers in the region, benchmarking research to identify trends in services for older adults nationwide, a survey of past PSRC participants, two focus groups (one of recent participants and one of non-participants), and a widely distributed online survey of adults over the age of 50 in Mercer, Middlesex, and Bucks Counties. Detailed reports from this research were made available to staff and Trustees.

Highlights from the research that particularly influenced plan development are listed here for reference.

- **Past Participation** – Past participants have tended to be most active in the Evergreen Forum, PSRC's lifelong learning program. These participants are highly-satisfied with their experiences, giving PSRC an excellent Net Promoter Score of 71.
- **Princeton Demographics** – Princeton remains a town of highly-educated people with higher-than-average incomes. However, demographics are shifting. There is growth in lower-income populations as new affordable housing developments are built. People born outside the U.S. now make up 30% of the town's residents. In order to expand participation at PSRC, the organization will need to diversify its programs and marketing strategies to reach the wider range of people who now call Princeton home.
- **Regional Demographics** – The area surrounding Princeton is increasingly diverse in terms of education, racial and ethnic background, and income. For example, 71.5% of people in Princeton identify as white. That number falls to 63.3% in Mercer County, and to 60.1% in Middlesex County. As PSRC increasingly thinks of itself as a regional organization, the greater diversity in the regional population will affect its strategy.
- **Technology** – The pandemic fueled a rapid adoption of technology among older adults, even those who had not previously been particularly interested in it. This has opened up new opportunities for PSRC to connect online with people locally, regionally, and even nationally.
- **Hybrid Participation** – As public health conditions improved, participants expressed diverse and strong preferences about in-person vs. online programs. In the Fall 2021 survey of PSRC participants, 39% of respondents preferred in-person programs, 23% preferred online programs, and 44% wanted a choice between the two. PSRC has recognized an opportunity to be more accessible by offering hybrid programs that run both in-person and online.

- **Participant Priorities** – The Winter 2022 community survey asked people, hat matters most to you as you get older?" Across all demographics, *staying physically active/healthy* was the most popular response, followed by *keep my mind active*. *Be financially secure* was important to people aged 50-70, and *keep learning new things* scored well with people aged 70+ and people in the 08540 zip code. In order to expand participation, PSRC can offer programs that respond to these priorities.

- **Participant Interests** – The community survey also offered respondents the chance to identify the types of programs that would be most interesting to them. *Exercise* programs scored well across all age groups, followed by *lectures on interesting topics*, *giving back to the community/volunteering*, and *organized trips to cultural sites and shows.* Given its popularity, the expansion of exercise programs may be an important point of entry for new participants.

- **Evergreen Forum** – While the Evergreen Forum remains tremendously popular with current PSRC participants, community survey data suggested that it may not have as much appeal to all potential audience groups. Just 32% of respondents expressed interest in *taking 6-8 week courses on topics like history, literature, current events, etc.* (52% of respondents in the 08540 zip code). While Evergreen should remain an important component of PSRC's offerings, it may be too great a commitment for some potential participants. The multi-week format and academic topics may make it less appealing as a point of entry for new participants.

- **Interest in Services** – People in the 50-59 year old age cohort expressed stronger interest in services, information, and support than other age cohorts. Topics like *understanding Medicare and health insurance*, *estate planning*, *technology help*, and *help with benefits like food stamps, housing, and energy bills* scored well with this group. Supporting these needs could be a way to make early connections with people in their 50s.

- **Importance of Continued Research** – As PSRC works to diversify its participants, it will be critical to form connections with different communities to better understand their needs and interests.

- **Inclusivity** – As PSRC expands its focus beyond the immediate Princeton community, building an inclusive atmosphere that welcomes many different kinds of people will be important to growing and diversifying participation.

Mission

The Princeton Senior Resource Center (PSRC) is a community nonprofit organization that exists to help older adults thrive.

We carry out this **mission** by offering support and guidance to older adults and their families, and by providing vital human connections, compassionate social services, dynamic lifelong learning, and meaningful volunteer opportunities that promote active, healthy, and engaged aging for adults aged 55 and above.

Vision

Our **vision** is to be an indispensable community asset for older adults and their families as they navigate the journey of aging.

PSRC envisions a world where older adults embrace aging and are valued for their wisdom, experience, and talent.

Our Core Values

Community
We facilitate and foster human connections so that no older adult, family, or caregiver feels alone in the journey of aging.

Compassion
We respect the dignity, wisdom, and worth of each person, serving the older adults in our community with compassion and empathy.

Inclusion
We purposefully embrace inclusion by actively working to remove barriers to participation at PSRC. We are committed to creating a more equitable, accessible, safe, welcoming, and inclusive center where differences are recognized, respected, valued, and celebrated.

Innovation
We employ creativity and imagination in developing programs and services to meet the needs of the community we serve.

Stewardship
We maximize the efficient use of financial and human resources while maintaining the highest ethical standards.

Purpose
We promote the idea that everyone's life should have purpose and meaning, providing older adults avenues to give of their time and talent in service of PSRC and the wider community.

Excellence
We strive for excellence in all aspects of our work, leading with flexibility and adaptability while continually seeking to improve the experience of our participants.

Joy
We create experiences with and for older adults, offering something for everyone, so that fun and joy are a part of our participants' daily lives.

Goal #1: Connect more people to the PSRC community by widening the scope of our programs, social services, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Objectives: By June of 2027, PSRC will:
- Increase overall participation in PSRC by 20%.
- Increase the number of participants involved in supportive groups and services by 30%.
- Increase the number of participants from groups currently underrepresented at PSRC to better reflect the diversity of our region.
- Increase participation by younger seniors who are approaching and in the early years of retirement (roughly ages 55-70) by 35%.

Strategy #1: Build new connections in our community.
- Periodically conduct a community assessment to better understand the current demographics, needs, and interests of different groups of older adults.
- Develop a Community Connection Council to support program and service development and connect PSRC to new partners and participants.
- Collaborate with existing community groups to connect with new audiences.
- Build relationships with leaders who can help us to make new participants feel welcome.

Strategy #2: Annually identify measurable goals for increasing the diversity of PSRC participants.
- Develop a system for tracking participants' demographic profiles to gain better understanding of who is and is not participating.
- Identify annual priorities for increasing participation from specific communities.

Strategy #3: Increase PSRC's capacity to incorporate principles of equity and inclusivity into everyday work.
- Offer equity, diversity, inclusion, and access training to staff and board members.
- Annually audit programs and services for inclusivity and adjust as needed.
- Offer programs and groups in languages other than English.

Strategy #4 Experiment with a variety of program topics and structures in order to attract new participants.

- Test new ideas based on our community assessment and ongoing community feedback, and refine and continue ideas that increase participation (for example, new exercise programs, arts and culture field trips, evening or weekend programs, etc.).
- Increase volunteer opportunities at PSRC and in the community, to help older adults connect with meaningful opportunities to use their time and skills.
- Develop an explicit program strategy that balances free, low-cost, and full-cost programming. Evaluate the impact of our pricing strategy on a semi-annual basis.

Strategy #5: Engage new participants in PSRC support groups and supportive services.

- Based on the community needs assessment (strategy #1), develop new groups that meet participants' identified needs.
- Develop new programs explicitly designed to foster relationships and address loneliness and isolation in the senior population.
- Continue to serve the residents of the affordable housing communities in the surrounding areas.
- Serve as a bridge that connects PSRC participants to supportive services they need as their circumstances change.
- In partnership with other organizations, develop programming focused on dementia and memory care.

Goal#2: Connect with older adults who do not visit PSRC in person, through the expansion of regional partnerships and virtual programs.

Objectives: By June of 2027, PSRC will:
- Extend PSRC's reach in communities surrounding Princeton, so that the number of non-Princeton residents participating in programs and services increases by 20%.
- Extend PSRC's virtual reach, so that the number of online participants in PSRC programs and services increases by 20%, including home-bound local residents, local residents who prefer online engagement, and regional and national participants.

Strategy #1: Develop a PSRC-branded virtual senior center to house all virtual programs and services.
- Secure startup funding to build the infrastructure and staff needed to launch.

Strategy #2: Strengthen partnerships in our regional community.
- Build partnerships with senior and community centers throughout Mercer, Middlesex, and Bucks Counties to share in-person and virtual programs.
- Use connections to nursing homes, senior living communities, social service and health care professionals to reach local seniors who are unable to travel but would benefit from participating in PSRC virtual programs.

Strategy #3: Promote the PSRC virtual senior center beyond our immediate region.
- Develop a promotional plan that identifies strategies for increasing visibility and participation.
- Maintain connections with Princeton residents who move elsewhere through virtual programs.

Strategy #4: Identify new streams of earned revenue that will make the virtual senior center financially sustainable.
- Investigate and test funding options, including but not limited to:
  - Partnerships with municipalities and senior centers, which would purchase a virtual senior center membership so their own members could access programs.
  - Sponsorships from senior living communities, which would receive promotional visibility and the opportunity for their residents to access programs.
  - Sponsorships from senior service organizations.
  - Increased program registration revenue.

Goal #3: Raise PSRC's visibility as an essential community asset.

Objectives: By June of 2027, PSRC will:
- Increase the visibility and awareness of PSRC using an appropriate brand awareness measurement developed in conjunction with our strategic rebranding work.
- Increase the rate of social media and website engagement by 4-4.5% annually. (1-3.5% is average/good, 6% is exceptional)

Strategy #1: Conduct a comprehensive brand refresh based on PSRC's updated mission, vision, and location.
- Redesign PSRC's online presence (website and social media channels) to reflect our new brand.

Strategy #2: Create annual marketing plans.
- Include targeted promotion and community relations for key audiences (such as people in their 60s, different racial/ethnic groups, etc.).

Strategy #3: Consider high-visibility community education and/or fundraising events that would promote PSRC's brand.

Strategy #4: Raise PSRC's visibility with people who work with older adults throughout the region.

Strategy #5: Develop a cohort of board, staff, volunteers, and participants trained to promote PSRC, serving as ambassadors for the organization and advocates for issues affecting seniors in our local communities.
- Provide training on key messaging and promotion skills following the brand refresh.
- Consider transitioning the current Advisory Council to an Ambassador Council that would focus on promoting PSRC in the community.

Strategy #6: Create an intentional process and deliberate programming focused on welcoming new people into the PSRC community.

Goal #4: Increase organizational capacity in alignment with program growth.

Objectives: By June of 2027, PSRC will:
- Increase annual earned program revenue by 10% per year.
- Identify and secure $100,000 of new earned revenue streams.
- Increase individual contributions to the annual fund by 5% per year.
- Increase revenue through annual sponsors and event sponsors by 5-7% per year.
- Increase total grant revenue by 10% per year.
- Increase staff headcount and skills to align with organizational growth.
- Offer highly-competitive staff compensation, in an effort to retain 90% of staff members annually.
- Increase the diversity of PSRC's board and staff.
- Enhance the board's capacity to serve as ambassadors and connectors for PSRC, yielding new funding, partnerships, volunteers, participants, and social media visibility.

Strategy #1: Expand programs and participation to generate additional revenue.
- Implement the strategic plan's program and marketing strategies to grow earned revenue by 10% per year.

Strategy #2: Identify new streams of earned revenue that will make the virtual senior center financially sustainable. (also appears in Goal 2)
- Investigate and test funding options, including but not limited to:
    - Partnerships with municipalities and senior centers, which would purchase a virtual senior center membership so their own members could access programs.
    - Sponsorships from senior living communities, which would receive promotional visibility and the opportunity for their residents to access programs.
    - Sponsorships from senior service organizations.
    - Increased program registration revenue.

Strategy #3: Continue to expand our donor base.
- Increase the number of individual donors supporting PSRC.
- Increase the number of "high level donors" who support PSRC's annual fund.
- Develop new corporate sponsorship opportunities, especially as virtual PSRC expands.
- Identify and secure new grant opportunities every year.

Strategy #4: Develop a stable and effective staff structure that supports organizational growth.
- Create a long-term workforce plan that identifies the staff talent and competencies needed to execute the strategic plan, and outlines options for adding needed competencies to PSRC's structure.
- Increase staff capacity at the same pace as program demands.
- Regularly complete compensation and benefits audits and adjust compensation accordingly over time.
    - Compensation plans should reflect the fact that our staff provides exceptional service and often works outside the traditional definition of roles at a senior center.

Strategy #5: Recruit board and staff members who represent a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.
- Annually conduct a board self-identification survey, to recognize gaps in board representation.
- Expand board candidate recruiting efforts into new networks.
- Audit board practices for inclusivity and adjust as needed.
- Advertise staff positions in locations likely to be seen by a wide range of candidates with diverse backgrounds (for example, affinity groups associated with professional associations for people who work with older adults).

Strategy #6: Encourage board members to be active community ambassadors for PSRC.
- Provide training for all board members in PSRC messaging, especially following the brand refresh.
- Encourage board members to attend/participate in PSRC programs, so they have personal experiences to relate.
- Develop a structure that supports and encourages this board work (for example, staff support, assigning board members to be ambassadors to specific stakeholders or communities, etc.).

Strategy #7: Recruit and retain additional volunteers to support program expansion.
- Publicize volunteer opportunities to current participants.
- Partner with local schools, corporations, and volunteer organizations to recruit new volunteers.
- Provide training that will allow volunteers to support program expansions (tech support for online/hybrid programs, volunteer "hosts" for in person programs).