



# **FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION**

## **OFFICE OF CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER**

### **IT STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2020-2024**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The IT Strategic Plan for the Federal Election Commission's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) covers the period from January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2024. The Plan focuses on aligning IT activities with FEC objectives and the government-wide Digital Government Strategy including IT modernization outlined for federal agencies by the Office of Management and Budget.

Across government and at the FEC, agencies are challenged to deliver and receive digital information and services, anytime, anywhere and on any device. We must also do so safely, securely and with fewer resources. Each year, the FEC has more data and information to store, manage, share and protect. Changes in the way political committees raise and spend funds have resulted in a stark increase in the number of transactions disclosed to the FEC each year. This ever-growing volume of campaign finance disclosure data must be received, processed and made available to the public within the agency's tight deadlines for public disclosure, and must be safeguarded to ensure the integrity and accessibility of the information.

Rapidly evolving technologies also challenge us to constantly upgrade and change our tools and systems to meet the public's desire for data access. New technologies require new methods for ensuring the security of our systems and the integrity and accessibility of our data.

Our challenge for the next several years is to position the FEC to meet the public's evolving expectations for access to digital data and tools by modernizing and streamlining our systems, processes and infrastructure. Guided by the IT Objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan, the FEC will continue to make improvements to meet the goals of the Digital Services Strategy to ensure that the agency continues to meet its own mission, now and in the future.

In order to meet these increased demands and challenges, the modernization effort includes not only improvements to the technology infrastructure but, just as important, changes in the way the FEC works. Thus, strategic objectives included in this Plan focus on our efforts to modernize the skillset of OCIO staff and to launch an outreach effort across the agency to introduce innovation and change culture as needed.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CIO – ALEC PALMER

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I am pleased to present an update to the IT Strategic Plan for the Federal Election Commission which illustrates the agency's strategic vision and direction for technology initiatives while providing guidance to agency decision makers as they make their investment decisions. Each year we make investments in technology in order to support the vital programs and services that serve constituents efficiently and effectively. These technology investments will also focus on providing our internal customers better tools that will enable the FEC staff to better serve their stakeholders and customers.

As digital services have the potential to transform every aspect of government, it is important that those investments be strategic and effective in delivering services and information with excellence. The way political committees raise, spend and report their financial activity, and the way citizens expect to access campaign data, has fundamentally changed over the past ten years. The FEC has kept pace with these changes.

By making strategic investments in technology, government serves citizens in a manner that provides them the convenience, access, choice and control over technology empowering their interactions with campaign finance data. The goals and objectives identified in this IT Strategic Plan consider mobile and cloud technologies first, and focus on modernizing our systems and practices to ensure we meet the public's expectations for information availability and customer service in the most efficient, effective and cost-effective way.

This Plan continues to focus on securing the critical technology infrastructure as well as building up the capacity and skill-level of the technology workforce. Finally, the Plan also highlights the continuing efforts to ensure the successful continuation of current technology initiatives as the FEC seeks to receive, process and make available an increasing volume of campaign finance information.

Over the past five years alone, the number of financial transactions disclosed to the agency has increased nearly four-fold, from 80 million transactions received in FY 2014 to 270 million received in FY 2019. In FY 2020 we are on track to receive over 600 million transactions. The work of OCIO to proactively prepare for this massive increase in transaction while basically maintaining staffing and budget levels demonstrates the IT modernization success thus far. This growth trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Working together, we can ensure the 21st century government is delivering results and effectively serving its 21st century constituents.

## IT STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

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### *Approach to Development*

The Federal Election Commission Strategic Plan, and the Digital Government Strategy were used to guide the development of this IT Strategic Plan. While our approach to IT modernization will rely on an agile, user-centered model and prioritize transitioning our operations to a DevOps model, we've developed the IT Objectives and strategies identified in this Plan through a traditional approach. The mission defines the purpose and focus of the IT organization. IT objectives are defined by consideration of the FEC strategic objectives and business strategy and activities. Each objective was created in support of a business goal and designed to counter a weakness or threat, while taking advantage of our strengths and opportunities. The objectives are followed by the supporting strategies and actions used to realize each FEC and IT objective.



### CRITICAL ISSUES

#### **CRITICAL ISSUES:**

- Show stoppers
- Short-term barriers to success
- Identify and control
- 6 months or less
- Contingencies

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.fec.gov/resources/cms-content/documents/FEC\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_FY\\_2018-2022.pdf](https://www.fec.gov/resources/cms-content/documents/FEC_Strategic_Plan_FY_2018-2022.pdf).

## ***ACHIEVING THE FEC'S MISSION***

Mission drives organizations, and the need to deliver better services to customers continues to push every level of government to look for new solutions. The FEC's Office of the Chief Information Officer is committed to ensuring that the FEC has IT systems, tools and resources in place to meet the Commission's mission to protect the integrity of the federal campaign finance process by providing transparency and fairly enforcing and administering federal campaign finance laws. Over the next five years, the OCIO will seek innovative solutions to meet IT challenges arising from rapidly evolving technologies and a growing demand for the FEC's services, in support of the FEC's mission.

The FEC has set as its strategic goal to fairly, efficiently and effectively administer and enforce the *Federal Election Campaign Act*, promote compliance and engage and inform the public about campaign finance data and rules, while maintaining a workforce that delivers results. This goal is supported by four objectives outlined in the FEC's Strategic Plan, FY 2018-2022.

### ***FEC Objective 1: Engage and Inform the Public about Campaign Finance Data***

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The *Federal Election Campaign Act* requires accurate and comprehensive public disclosure by federal candidates and political committees of all contributions and expenditures. In an average fiscal year, the FEC receives campaign finance reports, statements and other disclosure documents from more than 10,000 political committees and other filers. In FY 2017, the FEC received 82,136 campaign finance filings. Campaign finance reports filed during the year disclosed 107.7 million financial transactions, which were included in the FEC's campaign finance database.

During FY 2018-2022, the Commission will facilitate transparency in the federal campaign finance system through a state-of-the-art, web-based public disclosure system for all campaign finance activity, ensuring that this vast quantity of campaign finance data is available to the public quickly and in a manner that is easy for the general public to sort and search. In addition to ensuring greater access to a larger quantity of campaign finance data, the FEC will also promote public engagement, usability and greater understanding of campaign finance data through targeted educational and communication initiatives.

### ***FEC Objective 2: Promote Compliance with the FECA and Related Statutes***

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The Commission's statutory obligation is to administer, interpret and enforce the *FECA*, which serves the compelling governmental interest in deterring corruption and the appearance of corruption in financing elections. In doing so, the Commission must remain

mindful of the First Amendment's guarantees of freedom of speech and association, and the practical implication of its actions on the political process.

Public confidence in the political process depends not only on laws and regulations to assure transparency and limits and prohibitions on the amounts and sources of contributions, but also on the knowledge that those who disregard campaign finance regulations will face consequences for non-compliance. In FY 2018-2022, the FEC will focus on administering fair, effective and timely enforcement and compliance programs.

Complementing the FEC's vigorous enforcement and compliance programs are the FEC's increased efforts to promote voluntary compliance. Because of the large and rising number of political committees and the ever-growing number of financial disclosure reports filed with the FEC, voluntary compliance is essential. Accordingly, the Commission will devote significant resources in FY 2018-2022 to encourage voluntary compliance through the widespread dissemination of educational materials related to campaign finance laws to the public, the press, political committees and to state election officials.

### ***FEC Objective 3: Interpret the FECA and Related Statutes***

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The Commission responds to questions about how the *Act* applies to specific situations by issuing advisory opinions (AOs). In addition, Commission initiatives, Congressional action, judicial decisions, petitions for rulemaking or other changes in campaign finance law often necessitate that the Commission update or adopt new regulations. Consequently, the FEC undertakes rulemakings either to write new Commission regulations or revise existing regulations.

The Commission represents itself in litigation before the federal district and circuit courts and before the Supreme Court with respect to cases involving publicly financed Presidential candidates. It also has primary responsibility for defending the *Act* and Commission regulations against court challenges. In addition, the *FECA* authorizes the Commission to institute a civil action in enforcement matters that cannot be resolved through voluntary conciliation.

### ***Objective 4: Foster a Culture of High Performance***

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The Commission understands that its greatest resource is its employees. Organizational performance is also significantly improved when internal management processes are efficient and effective. The Commission will take steps outlined in this Plan to ensure that the agency's working environment promotes and supports the best efforts of its staff.

## **Role of the Office of the Chief Information Officer**

The OCIO consists of four units: (1) Enterprise Architecture; (2) Operational Support; (3) Data Administration; and (4) IT Security. The OCIO provides secure, stable and robust technology solutions for Commission staff and the public.

OCIO ensures agency employees have a technology infrastructure that allows them to perform their day-to-day responsibilities administering and enforcing campaign finance law. OCIO also develops and supports analytic reporting tools that help staff perform their disclosure and compliance duties.

In addition, OCIO develops and maintains the systems that serve as the public's primary source of information about campaign finance data and law. In this way, OCIO serves a pivotal role in ensuring the FEC protects the integrity of the federal campaign finance process by ensuring that the public has access to reliable data describing how candidates raise and spend funds to support their campaigns.

The OCIO bears the primary responsibility for pursuing the agency's first strategic activity, as identified in the FEC Strategic Plan: to ensure easy public access to both raw data and data summaries on the FEC website and to communicate the availability of disclosure resources to the public. Thus, in addition to supporting agency-wide information technology operations, OCIO places a special emphasis on ensuring that campaign finance data and information is collected, maintained and made available to the public in a manner that ensures the integrity and accessibility of that information.

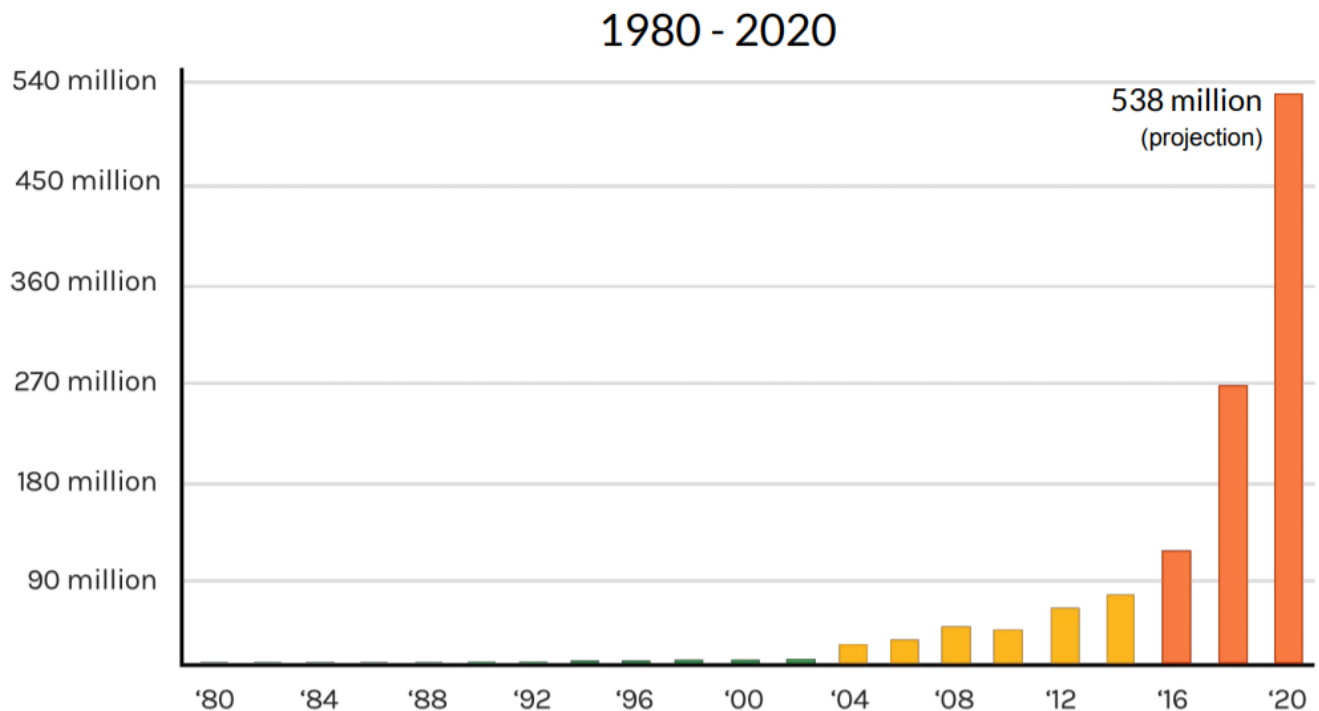
## DIGITAL STRATEGY

The Digital Government Strategy challenges federal agencies to build a 21st century government that works for the American people. The three primary goals of the strategy are to:

- Enable the public to access high-quality digital government information and services anywhere, anytime and on any device.
- Ensure that government seizes the opportunity to procure and manage devices, applications and data in smart, secure and affordable ways.
- Unlock the power of government data to spur innovation across the nation and improve the quality of services for the American people.

The FEC has already taken important steps to develop the IT infrastructure necessary to support a 21st century digital services model. The FEC’s vast store of campaign finance data is arguably our most valuable and most durable asset. The agency currently maintains more than 40 years’ worth of detailed data on campaign finance transactions collected over time and via an array of media, including letters, paper forms and electronically filed documents.

Changes in the way political committees raise and spend funds have resulted in a stark increase in the number of transactions disclosed to the FEC each election cycle. This ever-growing volume of campaign finance disclosure data must be received, processed and made available to the public within the agency’s tight deadlines for public disclosure, and must be safeguarded to ensure the integrity and accessibility of the information. The chart below illustrates the exponential growth of data transactions the FEC needs to process, store, search and display to support the FEC’s disclosure mission.



**Growth in the number of transactions filed each election cycle since 1980.**



The FEC has taken a number of steps to ensure the agency continues to meet its disclosure mission. During FY 2018, we completed the migration of the campaign finance database and the systems that support it into a secure, scalable, cloud environment. This migration allowed the agency to shut down one of its four physical data centers during FY 2018, thus reducing the agency's physical datacenter footprint by 25 percent.

As we reflect back on the website project, it is important to note that it was the first step of the much larger initiative of IT modernization. The entire undertaking had numerous collateral benefits from cloud computing to addressing security requirements, combined with significant reduction in annualized legacy expenses while allowing for exponential growth in data requirements. The agency also began to use agile methodology and practices through the website initiative. This iterative process ensures that the website team is able to respond quickly to arising issues, while constantly improving the website to incorporate user feedback.

At the same time, the FEC has opened the agency's campaign finance data for greater public use by developing a library of application programming interfaces (APIs) and taken significant steps to make this information portable by developing a campaign finance data interface that is fully mobile responsive. In May 2017, the FEC launched a fully redesigned website that employs a comprehensive, robust and deliberate approach to improving customer experience (CX).

Over the next few years, the FEC will continue work to meet the challenges of the Digital Government Strategy by modernizing IT systems and programs, ensuring the security and availability of data, improving customer experience and reshaping its workforce to meet future challenges.

## **FEC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The FEC's IT Strategic Plan outlines the steps to meet these challenges over the next four years by implementing the goals of the Digital Services Strategy.

### ***IT Objective 1: IT Modernization***

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GAO's 2016 report, *Federal Agencies Need to Address Aging Legacy Systems*, found that across government, federal agencies spend approximately 75 percent of their IT budgets to operate and maintain legacy investments that are becoming increasingly obsolete. Less than a quarter of federal IT spending is directed toward cloud computing and shared services that according to GAO and OMB make IT more efficient and agile and enable innovation. OMB specifically encourages agencies to implement cloud-based solutions whenever a secure, reliable, cost-effective cloud option exists and to use shared services for IT service delivery in order to increase return on investment, eliminate waste and duplication and improve the effectiveness of IT solutions.

The FEC IT Strategic Plan 2016-2020 set out a strategy to modernize the FEC's IT systems and reduce costs associated with maintaining legacy systems by building a new cloud-based website and shutting down associated legacy systems. With this work completed, the OCIO will focus its efforts over the next four years on migrating additional systems and data to the cloud, modernizing the eFiling platform, further reducing reliance on legacy systems and leveraging Open Source software and platforms.

### ***IT Objective 2: Security and Privacy***

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To support information sharing and collaboration, we must build in security, privacy and data protection throughout the entire technology life cycle. We must also adopt new solutions, such as continuous monitoring, identity and authentication and credential management that support the shift from securing devices to securing the data itself and ensuring that data is only shared with authorized users.

### ***IT Objective 3: Customer Experience***

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The President has included in his management agenda a focus on managing customer experience and improving service delivery. Customer experience (CX) refers to a combination of factors that result from touchpoints between an individual, business or organization and the federal government over the duration of an interaction and relationship. These factors include ease/simplicity, efficiency/speed and equity/transparency of the process, quality of the service itself and the helpfulness of service delivery employees. Together, these factors can drive the overall satisfaction and confidence with the program, agency and government at large.

***IT Objective 4: Workforce Reshaping***

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Over the next few years, we will be combining our IT modernization strategy with workforce reshaping for OCIO. This is a collaborative process that will involve both employees and supervisors as we work toward developing and instituting more meaningful ways to measure our performance. We will work together with OPM's HR Solutions to optimize position management and the structure of the division, making sure that we identify the needed skills for a position and then provide training and/or recruiting for that set of skills.

In 2019 we partnered with HR Solutions to update position descriptions for our division. Through this process we hope to more accurately reflect the job duties that each member of our team is handling and, where warranted, examine opportunities for career ladder development or competitive promotion where applicable. We're also working with OPM to develop performance standards to accurately measure and reflect our performance throughout the year.

The OCIO has a critical responsibility to ensure the FEC can meet its mission, today and in the future. Talent management will be a key element in order to ensure OCIO meets that responsibility, and we will continue to rely on our partnership with HR Solutions as we work to ensure that FEC OCIO's structure and skillsets support the agency's current and future needs.

## STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### IT Objective 1: IT MODERNIZATION

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#### Strategic Activity 1.1: Migrate appropriate systems and data to the cloud

The FEC is implementing a multi-phase plan to reduce reliance on physical servers and migrate appropriate systems and data to a cloud environment. As recommended by the agency's Cloud migration study completed in FY 2017, and in conjunction with the redesign of the agency's website, the FEC successfully migrated its largest database, the campaign finance database, to a cloud environment and shut down one physical data center during FY 2018. Cloud hosting offers a number of benefits for the FEC's campaign finance database and website. The agency's Internet traffic is variable, with many more visitors accessing the website during election years and near reporting deadlines. In addition to website visitors, filers need to access the electronic filing system and Commission staff need to access applications, including the website and databases, to perform their day-to-day duties. With a cloud-hosted application and database infrastructure, the FEC will only need to pay for the actual usage, rather than constantly maintaining the capacity to support peak usage, even during periods of reduced usage. Website downtime will be minimized and server maintenance will be managed by the cloud computing provider.

The next major system to be migrated to the cloud will be the eFiling platform, as described in Strategic Activity 1.2. Over the next five years the FEC will identify other assets that are appropriate for cloud hosting and migrate from its physical servers into a cloud-hosted environment. During FY 2020, the OCIO will partner with cloud architecture experts to determine how best to migrate other appropriate systems and databases to the cloud, allowing the agency to realize greater efficiency and performance in future years. The OCIO will focus on implementing the results of this study during FY 2021 and in future years.

#### Strategic Activity 1.2: Implement new eFiling platform

The FEC's eFiling system acts as the point of entry for submission of electronically filed campaign finance reports, providing faster access to reports and streamlining operations. This system provides for public disclosure of electronically filed reports, via the FEC website, within minutes of being filed. During FY 2017, the Commission published a study of its current eFiling platform, including a survey of the existing functionality of the FEC's free filing software and an in-depth investigation of needs expressed by filers.<sup>1</sup> Based on the recommendations revealed through this evidence-based study, the FEC plans to improve its eFiling platform to allow greater operating system flexibility for users when generating filings for submission to the Commission. Improvements to the eFiling platform will also increase the consistency and accuracy of

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.fec.gov/about/reports-about-fec/agency-operations/e-filing-study-2016/>.

reporting. The FEC's new eFiling platform is also expected to improve the process for validating filings prior to acceptance and generate modern file outputs that will provide for more flexibility in accessing data.

The modernization efforts will provide for seamless integration with the website. The FEC's modernized eFiling platform, which will be hosted in a cloud environment, will be administered by existing FEC staff, reducing the number of contractors needed to support this system.

### **Strategic Activity 1.3: Reduce operating and maintenance expenses related to legacy systems**

In addition to large-scale modernization initiatives to migrate the campaign finance database to a cloud environment and improve the FEC's eFiling system, the FEC will begin work to incrementally reduce reliance on legacy systems. Moving to a cloud-hosted model provides the Commission opportunities to continue to reduce its dependency on costly legacy systems, including mission-critical systems affecting both internal and external users, consistent with the recommendations of the Government Accountability Office's May 2016 report, *Federal Agencies Need to Address Aging Legacy Systems*. For example, planned improvements to the eFiling system, which was designed in the mid-1990s, will provide an opportunity to migrate the eFiling data center to a cloud environment, reducing costs for the support and maintenance of the legacy eFiling physical data center.

Over the next five years the FEC will take steps to modernize, or replace where applicable, legacy applications such as review modules, the disclosure suites, the case management system, Enterprise Content Management, and internal support systems such as those systems that support the FEC's Office of Human Resources.

Over the next five years, the FEC will take measures where applicable to continue migrating and modernizing the remaining legacy applications. Continuing to migrate legacy applications to the cloud will reduce both operating expenses and capital expense, and will enable the OCIO to react faster to the needs of business while driving greater operational efficiencies and innovation.

### **Strategic Activity 1.4: Implement Open Source Software**

The FEC is committed to using Open Source Software (OSS) wherever it best meets the needs and mission of the agency and in compliance with the FEC's Open Source Policy. The FEC is also committed to developing our work in Open Source Code and publishing publicly all source code created or modified by FEC, whether developed in-house, by government staffs or through contracts negotiated by FEC.

There are several positive aspects of OSS that should compel FEC to seek out OSS:

- Security - Publicly available source code enables continuous and broad peer review that ensures rigorous security and reliability. Specifically, this process encourages the identification and elimination of defects that might otherwise go unrecognized by a more limited core development team.

- Vendor Neutrality - Using OSS instead of proprietary software may reduce reliance on a particular software developer or vendor. OSS can be operated and maintained by multiple vendors, thus reducing barriers to entry and exit.
- Cost Saving - Open source licenses allow FEC to reuse existing OSS-based products to satisfy new needs quickly and secure substantial cost savings for the agency. OSS can provide a cost advantage in situations where many copies of the software may be required, and can mitigate risk of cost growth due to licensing in situations where the total number of users may not be known in advance. By sharing the responsibility for maintenance of OSS with other users, FEC can benefit by reducing the total cost of ownership for software.
- Innovation - OSS is particularly suitable for rapid prototyping and experimentation, where the ability to "test drive" the software with minimal costs and administrative delays can be important. Rapid prototyping with OSS enable innovation and creativity in the agency.
- Reusability - Developing agency's work in Open Source Code and publishing the code in the public domain creates economic value by lowering the cost of replicating similar work by other agencies or state and city governments or by allowing the private sector to build off of and create new businesses around open source code developed by FEC.

#### **Strategic Activity 1.5: Partner with other federal agencies**

The FEC is committed to achieving organizational excellence in its operations and administrative functions. With increased focus on the FEC's primary missions, OCIO continues to explore avenues for maintaining operational efficiencies at a reasonable cost. The Federal Shared Services program supported by OMB, CIO Council and GSA's Office of Government Wide Policy offers this opportunity. Currently, the FEC partners with USDA as a provider for payroll and financial management. OCIO will analyze current services, develop a roadmap for implementing additional services and assess agency readiness for an expansion of shared services. In expanding its federal shared services portfolio, the FEC will consider services that achieve the following goals:

- Reduce data duplication across business units;
- Ease the adoption of new government-wide requirements;
- Enhance the continuity of service for administrative functions;
- Reduce the infrastructure "data center" footprint;
- Improve business processes and data standards;
- Increase access to information for decision makers; and
- Share the cost of providing technology in a secure environment.

## IT Objective 2: SECURITY AND PRIVACY

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### Strategic Activity 2.1: Adopt the NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF)

FEC has recognized that perfect security is not feasible; it is a continuing process of detecting risks, process improvements and hardening defenses. For that reason, the benchmark of the FEC's approach to cybersecurity has always been practicability and continuous improvement. Our cybersecurity strategy outlines an approach of securing our infrastructure and preventing intrusions through a holistic cybersecurity program led by the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). The strategy implements leading practices for a comprehensive cybersecurity from the National Institute for Standards and Technology's (NIST) Cyber Security Framework (CSF) and industries' best practices.

The CSF functions provide a common language regarding cybersecurity issues that can help facilitate important discussions between different organizations. Therefore, adopting the NIST CSF will encourage effective collaboration and communication with FEC leadership and partner agencies and industries. FEC's cybersecurity strategy strives to mature the five functions of the NIST CSF:

**Identify:** This function seeks to develop our deep understanding to manage cybersecurity risks to systems, assets, data and capabilities. The projects in this function are foundational for effective use of the framework. Understanding the business context, the resources that support critical functions and the related cybersecurity risks will enable the OCIO to focus and prioritize our efforts. This action will be consistent with the organization's risk management action plans and business objectives.

**Protect:** This function seeks to help the team develop and implement the appropriate safeguards to ensure delivery of critical infrastructure services. This function supports the ability to limit or contain the impact of a potential cybersecurity event.

**Detect:** This function seeks to develop and implement the appropriate activities to identify the occurrence of a cybersecurity event. This will enable the OCIO to timely discover a cybersecurity event.

**Respond:** This function seeks to develop and implement the appropriate activities to take action regarding a detected cybersecurity event. The respond function supports the ability to contain the impact of a potential cybersecurity event.

**Recover:** This function seeks to develop and implement the appropriate activities to maintain plans for resilience and to restore any capabilities or services that were impaired due to a cybersecurity event. The recover function supports timely recovery to normal operations to reduce the impact from a cybersecurity event.

### **Strategic Activity 2.2: Robust security architecture**

The goal of the OCIO is to define a robust, innovative and holistic security architecture that mitigates modern threats. In partnership with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, the OCIO will collaborate with FEC stakeholders and technical experts to identify, protect, detect, respond to and recover from the impact of known and unknown potential threats. We will continuously assess security controls and address the remaining residual risks.

Through a rigorous assessment and authorization methods and programs such as the federal Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) program and Cyber.gov, the OCIO will continue to mature its cybersecurity program and security architecture to safeguard FEC's infrastructure, networks and applications against cyber threats and malicious activities.

Following the NIST guidelines and considering the Commission's own prioritization and resources, the first wave of projects primarily focuses on the "Protect" function to hinder threat actors from gaining access to the FEC's IT assets and data. The initial project includes strengthening our perimeter defenses using Software Defined Perimeter (SDP) and protecting our users from inadvertently infecting their systems by using a robust end-point security solution.

SDP will ensure that anyone attempting to access the FEC infrastructure is authenticated and authorized at the perimeter prior to being able to access any resources on the network. Finally, the FEC will seek to implement the most advanced endpoint security solution to combat zero-day attacks, enabling users to click on virtually anything without risk of compromise.

### **Strategic Activity 2.3: Leverage cloud first initiative for security, accessibility and recoverability**

The OCIO will strive to achieve the right balance between security, agility and transparency. Leveraging cloud computing allows FEC to take advantage of cost savings and cloud service providers' significant resources dedicated to maintaining the highest level of security. Hosting our information, data and systems in the cloud will provide a platform of security and privacy, allowing the FEC to better leverage government and industries best practices. Adopting a cloud first initiative will ultimately result in the consolidation and the modernization of all FEC's application and systems. The OCIO will leverage cloud service providers for their robust disaster recovery solutions, reducing the FEC's overall cost while eliminating the need to maintain physical disaster recover sites.

### **Strategic Activity 2.4: Build a cybersecurity culture**

For this comprehensive cybersecurity strategy to be successful, the OCIO will partner with federal agencies and industry leaders to leverage best practices for our IT workforce. The first line of defense in maintaining the protection and integrity of the agency's network is the ongoing education of employees about their role in identifying and preventing malicious activities. The OCIO's main target will be recruiting and training talent with cybersecurity expertise. In April 2019, the FEC entered into a partnership with the Partnership for Public Service to participate in



the Cybersecurity Talent Initiative. This selective, cross-sector program, which provides loan forgiveness to top bachelors and masters graduates around the United States in exchange for at least two-years' service at a federal agency, addresses the immediate cybersecurity talent deficiency faced by federal government agencies by attracting service-minded individuals to government who might not otherwise have applied.

## **IT Objective 3: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

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### **Strategic Activity 3.1: Focus FEC website and other digital services on improving customer experience**

Over the next five years, OCIO will work to develop its core CX functions, including:

- Defining internal measurements for website CX performance, including service-level metrics such as wait times and usage statistics available through the Digital Analytics Program (DAP).
- Improving governance by aligning CX strategy and activities with business decisions, initiatives and investments within the agency's broader mission and strategic priorities.
- Acquiring and developing the talent required to incorporate and improve CX within agency activities and empowering all OCIO employees to adopt a CX mindset through training and performance measurement.
- Partnering with business owners and subject matter experts to better understand intra-agency customer journeys.
- Expanding the use of the FEC's agile development model for service design to ensure a customer-centric approach, including user-centered design, open source development and agile development.

## **IT Objective 4: WORKFORCE RESHAPING**

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### **Strategic Activity 4.1: Train, restructure and better align IT workforce to IT modernization**

Building and sustaining a workforce with relevant IT skills to support IT modernization requires an investment in ongoing training to nurture the talent necessary to deliver tomorrow's technology. The OCIO will conduct a Workforce Skills Assessment to determine the skills gap of IT staff and expand its training programs to give experienced staff opportunities to learn new skills while reaching out to new staff with training and educational opportunities that pave the way to a fulfilling career at the agency. OCIO's managers and team leaders will work with staff to develop tailored individual development plans and establish a mentorship and career development program to provide career guidance and create opportunities for staff.

### **Strategic Activity 4.2: Formalize IT policies and procedures for portfolio management**

OCIO will establish and employ streamlined IT policy and governance processes that align IT solutions with user expectations and the agency's mission requirements. Through formalizing IT policy and governance, we will align the IT strategy with the agency's business strategy to ensure IT investments deliver value for the agency. We will improve the management of IT activities and provide oversight of IT programs and acquisitions by establishing processes, milestones, portfolio management, project management and reporting for IT resources. The result will be quality service delivery, cost control of these services and increased visibility and transparency.

### **Strategic Activity 4.3: Talent management**

We will develop and implement an effective talent management plan that identifies essential and specific core competencies needed to support IT Modernization. The agency faces the constant challenge to recruit and retain high-caliber IT professionals whose skills reflect current technology. To attract, engage and retain a highly skilled IT workforce, OCIO will continue to seek the best-qualified candidates and promote career goals across the IT workforce. OCIO works in partnership with the Office of Human Resources to review and update position descriptions and develop and implement the performance standards.

During 2019, the OCIO also partnered with HR Solutions to identify opportunities for enhancing or adjusting the OCIO's existing organizational structure and functions to align with the future of FEC technology infrastructure. HR Solutions facilitated exercises and group discussions that focused on the OCIO's culture, mission and organizational structure. During 2020, the OCIO will use the results from these exercises and discussions to help determine:

- What skills and training OCIO staff will need to support a modernized IT infrastructure;
- How to improve communication, leadership and teamwork and team culture to create an effective agile environment; and
- How best to partner with business units and the public to ensure the OCIO successfully meets the needs of end users.

#### **Strategic Activity 4.4: Develop Innovation Center**

Consistent with its commitment to fostering the talents and skills of its employees and providing excellent service to the public, the Commission has launched a cross-functional group within the agency to develop and implement user-centered, evidence-based design solutions for achieving the agency's mission efficiently and effectively. The team will leverage technological advancements to improve the delivery of mission critical functions. This team will improve organizational decision making and be tasked with harnessing the creativity and ideas of agency employees, and emerging technologies, to restructure systems, tools and processes, while building a 21<sup>st</sup> century IT infrastructure to better serve the American public.

#### ***IT Strategic Plan Governance***

This IT Strategic Plan is a living document which will be reviewed annually and modified to reflect progress and updates, including changes in alignment with FEC objectives and to the business strategy.

#### **CRITICAL FACTOR INFLUENCING SUCCESS**

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In order to achieve success in our strategic plan we will need to have resources and funding approved by the Commission. These resources will include not only systems and tools, but also workforce support. In order to meet the IT modernization objectives identified in this Plan, OCIO staff will need the skillsets, training and environment necessary to adopt new processes and practices to support a modern IT infrastructure.