



OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
2006-2007 Strategic Plan



OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Back Row (Left to Right): Dennis W. Swartout—District 3; Philip Kuyers—District 2; Joyce Kortman—District 1; Jane M. Ruiters—District 4; Robert J. Rinck—District 5; James C. Holtrop—District 10

Front Row (Left to Right): Cornelius Vander Kam—District 11; Gordon Schrottenboer—District 7; Chair Roger Rycenga—District 6; Vice-Chair Donald Disselkoen—District 8; Edward Berghorst—District 9

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Process Summary

Ottawa County, the eighth-largest county in Michigan, is a rapidly-growing community of over 250,000 people located along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The government that serves the community is comprised of approximately 1,100 union, non-union, and elected employees with occupations as diverse as nursing, corrections, parks, administration, and law enforcement.

An 11-member Board of Commissioners, each elected to a two-year term, governs the County. The Board of Commissioners establishes the general direction of government and provides oversight of administrative functions of the County. The Board appoints a County Administrator who is responsible for the management of County operations that fall directly under the authority of the Board of Commissioners. The remaining operations are managed by either elected officers (Clerk, Drain Commissioner, Prosecutor, Register of Deeds, Sheriff, and Treasurer), statutory boards (Community Mental Health), or the judiciary.

While the Board of Commissioners had conducted strategic planning activities in the past, the County had not had an active strategic plan, mission, or organizational values in place for several years, so in 2004 the Board began collecting information needed to develop a plan. Those items included:

- Employee Survey
- Citizen Survey
- Mandated Services Study
- MIS (IT) Evaluation by Plante and Moran
- Employee input on mission statement
- ESRI evaluation of GIS and development of business plan
- Completion of wage & classification study by William Rye & Associates
- United Way Community Needs Assessment
- Definition and clarification of financing tools

After collecting and considering the variety of information, the Board met on March 23 and 24, 2006, to begin work on its strategic plan. Activities at the meetings included development of concepts to be contained in a mission statement and core values, analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), and the identification of goals for 2006. Since the initial meetings in March, the Board has reviewed draft mission, vision and values statements and goals and objectives and developed outcome measures which will indicate success in completing the plan's goals. The results of the process follow.

A **VISION** statement indicates how an organization views its ideal, or ultimate, goal. The Board of Commissioners has established the following vision statement.

Ottawa County strives to be the location of choice for living, working, and recreation

A **MISSION** statement assists an organization in easily communicating to a variety of constituencies what it does, who it serves, and why it does so. To develop Ottawa County's mission statement, the Board of Commissioners reviewed employee input and the mission statements of other governments and corporations, which assisted in identifying key concepts to be included.

Ottawa County is committed to excellence and the delivery of cost-effective public services

A formal statement of organizational values was developed to clearly identify not only the principles upon which the organization is based, but the way in which it treats its employees and citizens.

We recognize the importance of the **DEMOCRATIC PROCESS** in the accomplishment of our mission, and hold it as a basic value to respect the rule of the majority and the voted choices of the people; to support the decisions of duly elected officials; and to refrain from interference with the elective process.

We recognize the importance of the **LAW** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to work within, uphold, support, and impartially enforce the law.

We recognize the importance of **ETHICS** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to always act truthfully, honestly, honorably and without deception; to seek no favor; and to receive no extraordinary personal gain from the performance of our official duties.

We recognize the importance of **SERVICE** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to treat each citizen as a customer; to do all we can, within the bounds of the County's laws, regulations, policies and budget, to meet requests for service.

We recognize the importance of **EMPLOYEES** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to treat each employee with professional respect, recognizing that each person using his or her trade or vocation makes a valuable contribution; to treat each employee impartially, fairly and consistently; and to listen to the recommendations and concerns of each.

We recognize the importance of **DIVERSITY** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to treat all people with respect and courtesy.

We recognize the importance of **PROFESSIONALISM** in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value that each employee will perform to the highest professional standards and to his or her highest personal capabilities.

We recognize the importance of **STEWARDSHIP** of public money in the accomplishment of our mission and hold it as a basic value to discharge our stewardship in a responsible, cost-effective manner, always remembering and respecting the source of the County's funding.

Prior to setting goals, members of the Board of Commissioners examined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to Ottawa County as a whole. The items in each category are not ranked by importance, nor is this intended to be an all-inclusive list, however it does form a basis for the subsequent development of goals and objectives. In addition, the items identified provide a view of potential issues that may not affect county government in general but may impact the environment in which the County provides services in the near- or long-term future.

STRENGTHS

- Open Land
- Citizens
- Employees
- Recreation
- Financially Strong
- Work Ethic (Religious Values)
- Location
- Soils, Lake Michigan
- Diversified Economy - Service, Manufacturing
- Financing Tools
- Conservative Thinking
- K-12 Education
- Universities & Colleges
- Proximity to Grand Rapids
- Infrastructure - sewer, water
- Fresh, Quality Water
- Low Crime Rate
- Parks
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Credibility of Local Government - Accessible, Transparent
- Creativity, Ingenuity
- Medical facilities

- Location Relative to Grand Rapids
- Infrastructure in Urban Areas
- Road Structures
- Communication
- Citizen Government Knowledge
- Parochialism
- Diversity - Ethnicity
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Homogeneity
- Lack of High-Tech Jobs
- Education for High-Tech Jobs
- Conservative Thinking
- WMSRDC/3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Real Estate Market

- Losing Jobs to Other Areas
- State Tax Structure: Industry & Agriculture
- Current Michigan Economy
- Lack of Global Productivity
- Term Limits in State Government
- Union Influence
- K-12 Education
- Family Structure Erosion
- Visionary Planning
- Economic Development Market
- Regional Plan
- Road Commission Structure
- Different Philosophies at Township Level on Growth

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

- Overcome weaknesses
- Greenville Example - Watch how workers are retrained
- Not Completely Developed - Still have a chance to define how the County looks
- Visionary Planning
- Wireless Broadband Project
- Technology - miOttawa, Justice Imaging
- Global Recognition
- Service/Program Collaboration
- Outcome/Measurement Process
- "New" Industries
- Regional Competition (WMSA)
- Economic Spillover from Neighboring Communities
- Land Use Influence - Master Plan & Zoning
- Transportation Planning
- Service Consolidation/Regional Partnerships - Planning, Road Commission, Fire
- Board of Public Works
- Appointed Boards Term Limit Policy
- Diversity
- Disability Hiring
- Class Action Lawsuit - Mandates
- Economic Development

- Broadband - Industry can go wherever it wants
- Spillover from development
- Lack of cohesive transportation planning
- Loss of State Funding
- Home Rule
- (Unfunded) Mandates
- Local Funding
- Undisciplined Growth
- Disaster Recovery
- Weather
- Water Pollution from farm waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, and other sources

- Demographic Challenges
- Geographic Fractures
- Job Loss
- Funding for Infrastructure (Roads, etc.)
- Outsourcing
- Loss of Local Ownership
- Population Growth & Immigration
- Drugs
- Limited Taxing Authority - Millage Cap, Proposal A
- Decreasing Citizen Knowledge of Government
- Unique County Problems

THREATS

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND OUTCOMES

Under guidance from the mission statement, goals focus the direction of an organization's work. Goals are relatively static in nature, however the objectives that assist in accomplishing the goals are likely to change annually. Outcome measurements are the ultimate indicators of success, measuring the impact of actions conducted to achieve goals and objectives.

What do we want to do?

How will we know our actions were effective?

GOAL 1: TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE COUNTY

Objective 1: Continue to advocate that the State of Michigan remain committed to continuing revenue sharing payments to counties

- Inform the public of the impact of the loss of revenue sharing
- Complete the revenue sharing strategy
- Continue to act at the State level

State legislators report understanding of the County's position on the issue and all vote to retain revenue sharing

Objective 2: Identify and develop strategies to address potential financial threats

- Fully fund financial tools
- Research and develop a plan to address existing and future financial threats which clearly identifies threats and solutions
- Continue implementation of 2004 budget balancing plan

Financing tools are fully funded, operational budget deficit is eliminated, and Commissioners approve a strategy to address financial threats

Objective 3: Identify and develop a plan for funding legacy costs

- Identify legacy costs and benefits
- Acquire an actuarial estimate of Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities
- Develop a plan to address OPEB and other legacy costs and liabilities

Commissioners approve a plan to address OPEB liabilities

Objective 4: Establish an understanding of Community Mental Health funding and structure

- Complete Fiscal Services and Planning Department reports on Mental Health funding
- Research other counties' communication with mental health agencies, both authorities and county agencies
- Consider a resolution of support for or update of BDO Seidman study

100% of Commissioners report having a clear understanding of Community Mental Health funding and structure

Objective 5: Work at the State and Federal levels to address unfunded and under-funded mandates

- Work with MAC to seek legal action where appropriate
- Communicate analysis and results of mandated services study to all State and Federal legislators

100% of legislators oppose new under- or unfunded mandates and recognize the importance of fully funding existing mandates

Objective 6: Maintain or improve bond ratings

- Present thorough, high-quality information to bond rating agencies as the Grand Haven/Fillmore project bonds are prepared for sale

100% of ratings from Fitch, Standard and Poor's, and Moody's are maintained or improved

What will we do to get there?

GOAL 2: TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS, EMPLOYEES, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Objective 1: Inform and mobilize the public around the potential impacts of the loss of state revenue sharing

- Inform the public of the impact of the loss of revenue sharing
- Complete the revenue sharing strategy
- Continue to act at the State level

25% of citizens report knowledge of revenue sharing & potential impacts of its loss; 100% of legislators report being contacted by the public regarding revenue sharing; 1% of citizens report contacting a legislator

Objective 2: Consider and implement new methods of communication

- Consider monthly newspaper column or advertisement based on citizen survey results
- Review MacMedia contract
- Consider a monthly or quarterly newsletter to citizens
- Work with school government classes to inform students about county government
- Consider reestablishing a speakers' bureau
- Consider holding Board meetings at different locations throughout the county
- Continue to implement new interactive features on miOttawa.org

25% of citizens report using miOttawa.org to communicate with and/or learn about Ottawa County government; 40% of citizens report good awareness of County government issues and activities

Objective 3: Continue and improve departmental annual report process to clearly identify goals, issues, future plans, and performance measures

- Revise annual report requirements and schedule

100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with annual report process

Objective 4: Identify and implement methods of communicating with employee groups

- Conduct focus groups with Group T employees
- Continue using the Front Page and all-staff e-mails to communicate important information to employees
- Establish Labor-Management Cooperation Committee
- Continue and improve employee-edited newsletter

Percentage of employees reporting satisfaction with communication from Administration increases by 20% on next employee survey

Objective 5: Strengthen role in state and national professional organizations

- Identify all professional memberships and participants
- Encourage County representatives to seek leadership positions

Ottawa County, its Commissioners, and staff are recognized as leaders and hold leadership positions in professional organizations

What do we want to do?

How will we know our actions were effective?

GOAL 3: TO CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHY PHYSICAL, ECONOMIC, & COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

Objective 1: Investigate opportunities to impact the consequences of development

- Consider recommendations of the Purchase of Development Rights Subcommittee
- Continue implementation of the Urban Smart Growth Demonstration Project

Commissioners consider the recommendations of the Purchase of Development Rights Subcommittee; One opportunity for the County to impact the consequences of development is identified and successfully completed

Objective 2: Consider opportunities to establish a countywide land use and economic development planning organization

- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a countywide land use and economic development organization

Commissioners report satisfaction that options for a countywide land use and economic development planning organization have been fully evaluated

Objective 3: Examine water quality policies and develop a research-based water quality action plan

- Work with researchers to identify areas of concern and volunteer as research sites as appropriate
- Investigate NPDES policy
- Evaluate the need for countywide phosphorus fertilizer regulations
- Host a water quality forum to present research results to the community
- Convene a group to foster better communication on water quality issues

A plan of action with measurable results is developed from Dr. Rose's research; Commissioners consider phosphorus regulations; A well-attended, informative water quality forum is hosted; A group is formed to foster better communication on water quality issues and a communication plan is completed

Objective 4: Assist in completion of a groundwater resources inventory

- Continue to work with local units of government to investigate funding opportunities for completing a groundwater resources inventory

A county groundwater resources inventory is completed

Objective 5: Discuss and act upon road policy issues as appropriate

- Conduct a work session to review pending legislation and Road Commission structure options
- Continue advocacy on US-31 and other major projects at the state level

100% of Commissioners report greater understanding of pending legislation and road policy issues; 100% of legislators report understanding of County position on applicable issues

Objective 6: Provide quality County facilities throughout the county

- Commissioners approve a financing plan for the Grand Haven/Fillmore project and turn project over to Building Authority
- Complete Holland District Court construction

100% of Holland District Court construction is completed; A financing plan is approved and the project is submitted to the Building Authority

What will we do to get there?

What do we want to do?

How will we know our actions were effective?

GOAL 4: TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE COUNTY'S ORGANIZATION AND SERVICES

Objective 1: Review and evaluate the organization, contracts, programs, and services for potential efficiencies

- Conduct organizational efficiency and structure reviews, including Clerk/Register, Board of Public Works, Equalization/GIS/PDM, GIS/IT
- Review service contracts to determine if it is more cost-effective to complete work in-house
- Evaluate drug courts
- Evaluate employee insurance plan
- Evaluate animal control contract
- Maximize relationships with organizations such as MSU Extension to ensure services are not duplicated
- Continue the work of the Jail Mental Health Task Force
- Complete implementation of the Plante & Moran IT Study

Commissioners consider the combination of the offices of Clerk and Register of Deeds; Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the drug court pilot projects; Commissioners consider the creation of a Board of Public Works; Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the provision of animal control services; Services covered by contract are provided in the most cost-effective manner; Commissioners consider the location of GIS services in the County organization; IT study implementation is complete and operating effectively

Objective 2: Examine opportunities for offering services to local units of government

- Evaluate options for offering services to local units of government

100% of County services that are cost-effective to offer are made available to local units of government

Objective 3: Prioritize discretionary services

- Provide Commissioners with the opportunity to rank discretionary services
- Inform providers of discretionary services of the ranking, process used, and potential impact of the loss of revenue sharing dollars

All providers of discretionary services are aware of the ranking of services, process used, and the potential impact of the loss of revenue sharing

Objective 4: Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement system

- Offer training to departments on how to develop outcome-based performance measurements
- Require submission of outcome-based performance measurements with budget

100% of County departments use outcome-based performance measurements to make management and service decisions

What will we do to get there?

GOAL 4: TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE THE COUNTY'S ORGANIZATION AND SERVICES

Objective 5: Establish better employee-management communications

- Establish Labor-Management Cooperation Committee
- Implement Employee Survey Work Team recommendations
- Conduct Group T focus groups

100% of Labor-Management Cooperation Committee members report improved sense of communication between labor and management; 100% of Labor-Management Cooperation Committee members report greater understanding of issues facing the County; 20% increase in employee satisfaction with "climate of trust"; Commissioners and Administrator consider implementation of Employee Survey Work Team recommendations

Objective 6: Ensure the security and recoverability of paper and electronic records

- Develop a records backup/disaster recovery plan for all records
- Develop a policy and procedures for record storage controls
- Investigate a potential archive/record center
- Evaluate compliance with record retention and storage mandates

All paper and electronic records in full compliance with mandates and are covered under a disaster recovery plan which minimizes potential impacts of a disaster on County operations

Objective 7: Evaluate substance abuse funding, service structure, and community needs

- Examine role in and structure of Lakeshore Coordinating Council
- Examine the relationship of substance abuse funding to community needs
- Evaluate P.A. 2 funding

A majority of Commissioners are satisfied that substance abuse services and funding are appropriately evaluated

Objective 8: Complete labor negotiations with employee groups

- Engage appropriate employee groups in labor negotiations

100% of labor contracts are renewed prior to the expiration of the former contract

What will we do to get there?

ASSIGNED RESOURCES AND DEADLINES

Once goals, outcomes, and objectives have been established, it is important to assign deadlines and resources to ensure that the plan activities are completed.

Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
Strategic Planning: Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

	Projected Completion	Resources Assigned
Goal 1: To maintain and improve the strong financial position of the County		
<i>Objective 1: Continue to advocate that the State of Michigan remain committed to continuing county revenue sharing</i>		
State legislators report understanding of the County's position on the issue and all vote to retain revenue sharing	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning & Grants
<i>Objective 2: Identify and develop strategies to deal with potential financial threats</i>		
Commissioners approve strategy to deal with financial threats that clearly identifies potential threats & solutions	12/31/06	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Financing tools are fully funded	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Operational budget deficit is eliminated by implementation of 2004 Plan	12/31/07	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
<i>Objective 3: Identify and develop a plan for funding legacy costs</i>		
Commissioners approve plan to address OPEB liabilities	12/31/06	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
<i>Objective 4: Establish a clear understanding of mental health funding and structure</i>		
100% of Commissioners report having a better understanding of mental health funding & structure	12/31/06	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Mental Health
<i>Objective 5: Work at the state and federal levels to address unfunded and under-funded mandates</i>		
Communicate analysis of mandated services and funding to all state and federal legislators	12/31/06	Administrator, Fiscal Services
<i>Objective 6: Maintain or improve bond ratings</i>		
Ratings from Fitch, Standard and Poor's, and Moody's are maintained or improved	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Goal 2: To maintain and enhance communication with citizens, employees, & other stakeholders		
<i>Objective 1: Inform and mobilize the public around the potential impacts of the loss of State revenue sharing</i>		
25% of citizens report knowledge of State revenue sharing and the potential impacts of its loss	12/31/07	Commissioners, Administrator
100% of legislators report being contacted by citizens regarding revenue sharing	12/31/06	Commissioners, Administrator
1% of citizens report contacting a legislator in support of retaining State revenue sharing	12/31/07	Commissioners, Administrator
<i>Objective 2: Consider and implement new methods for communicating with the public</i>		
25% of citizens report using miOttawa.org to communicate with and/or learn about the County	12/31/07	Administrator, Information Technology
40% of citizens report good awareness of County activities	12/31/07	Commissioners, Administrator
<i>Objective 3: Continue and improve departmental annual report process to better identify goals, issues, future plans, & performance measures</i>		
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with annual report process	12/31/07	Commissioners, Administrator
<i>Objective 4: Identify and implement methods for communication with employee groups</i>		
Employees reporting satisfaction with communication from Administration increase by 20%	12/31/06	Administrator, Administration Departments
<i>Objective 5: Strengthen role in state and national professional organizations</i>		
Ottawa County, its Commissioners, and its staff are recognized as leaders & hold organizational leadership positions in professional organizations	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, All Departments
Goal 3: To contribute to a healthy physical, economic, and community environment		
<i>Objective 1: Investigate opportunities to impact the negative consequences of development</i>		
Commissioners consider the recommendations of the Purchase of Development Rights Committee	9/30/06	Administrator
Identify one new opportunity for the County to impact the negative consequences of development and successfully do so	3/31/06	Planning & Grants
<i>Objective 2: Consider opportunities to establish a countywide land use and economic development planning organization</i>		
Commissioners are satisfied that options for a countywide land use and economic development planning organization have been fully evaluated	6/30/07	Administrator, Planning & Grants

Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
Strategic Planning: Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

	Projected Completion	Resources Assigned
Goal 3: To contribute to a healthy physical, economic, and community environment		
<i>Objective 3: Examine water quality policies and develop a research-based, water quality action plan</i>		
Plan of action with measurable results is developed from the research of Dr. Joan Rose	12/31/06	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
<i>Objective 4: Assist in completion of a groundwater resources inventory</i>		
Groundwater resources inventory is completed	12/31/07	
<i>Objective 5: Discuss and act upon road policy issues as appropriate</i>		
100 % of Commissioners report greater understanding of pending legislation & policy issues related to roads	8/31/06	Administration, Planning & Grants
Legislators report understanding of County position on applicable issues	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning & Grants
<i>Objective 6: Provide quality County facilities throughout the county</i>		
Commissioners approve a financing plan for the Grand Haven/Fillmore Facility Plan	7/1/06	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Holland District Courthouse construction is 100% complete	9/1/06	Administrative Services
Goal 4: To continually improve the County's organization and services		
<i>Objective 1: Review and evaluate the organization, contracts, programs, and services for potential efficiencies</i>		
Commissioners consider the combination of the offices of Clerk and Register of Deeds	9/30/06	Administrator
Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the Drug Court pilot projects	9/30/06	Planning & Grants
Commissioners consider the creation of a Board of Public Works	3/30/07	Administrator, Planning & Grants
Commissioners evaluate the provision of Animal Control services	3/30/07	Administrator, Administrative Services, Sheriff
Services such as copier and technology maintenance are provided in the most cost-effective manner	3/30/07	Administrator, Administrative Services, IT
Commissioners consider the location of GIS services in the County organization	12/31/06	Administrator, Administrative Services, IT
<i>Objective 2: Examine opportunities for offering services to local units of government</i>		
100% of County services that may be of use are made available to local units of government	9/30/07	Administrator, All Departments
<i>Objective 3: Prioritize discretionary services</i>		
All recipients of discretionary services are aware of the ranking of services and the potential impact of the loss of revenue sharing	12/31/06	Administrator, Fiscal Services
<i>Objective 4: Continue implementation of performance measurement system</i>		
100% of County departments use outcome-based performance measurements to make management decisions	12/31/07	Administrator, Fiscal Services
<i>Objective 5: Establish better employee-management communications</i>		
100% of Labor-Management Committee members report improved sense of communication between labor and management	12/31/06	Administration, Labor-Management Committee
100% of Labor-Management Committee members report greater understanding of issues facing the County	12/31/06	Administration, Labor-Management Committee
20% increase in employee satisfaction with "climate of trust"	12/31/06	Administration, Labor-Management Committee
Commissioners and Administrator consider implementation of Employee Survey Work Team recommendations	12/31/06	Administration, Employee Survey Work Team
<i>Objective 6: Ensure the security and recoverability of paper and electronic records</i>		
All paper and electronic records are covered under a disaster recovery plan which minimizes potential impacts of a disaster on business	6/3/07	Administration, All Departments
<i>Objective 7: Evaluate substance abuse funding, structure, and community needs</i>		
A majority of Commissioners are satisfied that substance abuse services and funding are appropriately evaluated	12/31/06	Planning & Grants, Fiscal Services, Health, CMH
<i>Objective 8: Complete labor negotiations with applicable employee groups</i>		
100% of labor contracts are renewed prior to the expiration of the former contract	12/31/06	Administrator, Human Resources