



OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Strategic Plan and 2010 Business Plan



OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Back Row (Left to Right): Gordon D. Schrottenboer - District 7; Jane M. Ruiter - District 4;
Matthew M. Hehl - District 5; Robert W. Karsten - District 9;
Vice-Chair James C. Holtrop - District 10;
Joyce E. Kortman - District 1; James H. Holtvluwer - District 11

Front Row (Left to Right): Dennis W. Swartout - District 3; Donald G. Disselkoen - District 8;
Chair Philip D. Kuyers - District 2; Roger G. Rycenga - District 6

Ottawa County, the eighth-largest county in Michigan, is a beautiful community of over 250,000 people located along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The government that serves the community is comprised of approximately 1,100 employees and elected officials with occupations as diverse as nursing, parks, corrections, 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 manages the budget, provides leadership and management of Board initiatives, and oversees general County operations. 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. This included the employee and resident surveys, a study of mandated services, employee input on the mission statement, evaluations of several departments, a wage and classification study, the United Way Community Needs Assessment, and definitions of the County's financing tools.

After collecting and considering this information, the Board met on March 23 and 24, 2006, to begin work on its strategic plan. That initial plan was adopted and implemented over the next two years. The Board now meets annually to review the strategic plan and develop an accompanying business plan comprised of objectives that serve as action steps toward achieving the strategic plan.

The Board of Commissioners met on January 19, 2010, to create the business plan for 2010. This involved an update of objectives for 2010 and a review of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) facing the County. After the Board established draft objectives, Administration assigned resources to each objective, 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. The Board of Commissioners has established the following mission statement:

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

GOALS focus the direction of an organization's work, under the guidance from the vision and mission statement. Goals are relatively static in nature and will not often change. The four goals of the Board of Commissioners are:

- 1. To maintain and improve the strong financial position of the County.**
- 2. To maintain and enhance communication with citizens, employees and other stakeholders.**
- 3. To contribute to a healthy physical, economic and community environment.**
- 4. To continually improve the County's organization and 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 residents.

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 resident 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.

BUSINESS PLAN - 2010

OBJECTIVES, DELIVERABLES AND OUTCOMES

While goals are relatively static in nature, the objectives that assist in accomplishing the goals are likely to change annually. Deliverables are specific items of action that give further meaning and substance to an objective. Outcome measurements are the ultimate indicators of success, measuring the impact of actions conducted to achieve goals and objectives.

Prior to setting goals, members of the Board of Commissioners examined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting the 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 forms a basis for the development of goals and objectives. In addition, the items identified provide a view of potential issues that may impact the environment in which the County provides services in the near- or long-term future.

STRENGTHS

- Community image - good place to raise a family, quality of life
- Location - good place to live
- Natural Resources (lakes, rivers, trees)
- Financial health
- Quality management by County Board and staff
- Effective services provided by dedicated employees
- Public safety - low crime
- Parks system
- Agriculture
- Potential for future energy development
- Industry
- Educational systems; public and private, higher education
- Entrepreneurs
- Regional cooperation
- Training programs and communication with employee groups
- Area traits; conservative, work ethic and religion
- Close to cultural resources
- Transportation
- Health care, local hospitals and proximity to Kent County
- Culture of volunteering and philanthropy, community services provided by non-profit and religious groups
- Strong recreational opportunities
- Infrastructure

OPPORTUNITIES

- Legislative activity - lobbyist to develop proactive strategies
- Local government communication, relations and assistance
- State constitutional convention
- Economic development (Pfizer plant, energy, agriculture)
- Use of new communication tools, social networking
- Sustainable thinking - "going green", recycling, cost savings
- Growth in health care industry
- Economic climate allows for new thinking; regional focus, collaboration and consolidation
- Programs to meet new needs (emerging industries, substance abuse)
- Maintain open spaces
- Increase and recognize diversity
- Tourism (lakes, parks)
- Improve transit, conduct corridor studies
- Bring the road commission closer to the county, various strategies
- Bring balance to regulation in economic climate
- Provision of infrastructure
- Increase funding for mandated services

- Effective communication with citizens and other stakeholders
- Lack of diversity, need to be a more welcoming place for diversity
- Declining transportation system with inadequate funding
- Redundancy, need for increased regional collaboration/consolidation
- Need to bring issues along slower to match a comfort-level with local units of government
- Runoff and Water Pollution
- Geographic division by Grand River
- Overall economic conditions
- State government
- Workforce unprepared, inadequate for future jobs
- Lack of countywide mass transit, especially to County facilities, rural areas
- Three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Accessibility and affordability for housing in disabled and elderly populations
- Over-reliance on manufacturing
- Managing growth to keep open spaces

- Financial state of the economy - unemployment, state budget
- Loss of revenue sharing, dropping property tax revenue
- Crisis in the housing industry; foreclosures, loss of value, etc
- Rising pension and health care costs
- Lack of a regional economic development entity
- Bigotry and challenges of diversity
- Decreasing water quality, beach closures
- Excessive State/Federal regulation and mandates
- Air pollution regulation changes
- Gang and drug activity, WEMET funding
- Conflicts between being environmental and promoting business
- Aging population
- Road conditions and funding
- Domestic violence and hunger
- Substance abuse
- Globalization
- Term limits and potential of a Constitutional Convention
- Green industry overkill, need to keep goal of a diverse economy

WEAKNESSES

THREATS

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

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

Objective 1: Advocate on legislative issues to maintain and improve the financial position of the County.

- *Advocate to achieve full funding of mandates.*
- *Advocate to achieve the full reinstatement of revenue sharing.*
- *Work with our legislative delegation to make our positions statements on legislative issues clear.*
- *Identify other legislation that impacts our financial position and develop clear position statements on those issues.*
- *Evaluate the value of the lobbyist contract.*
- *Develop improved communication methods to make our position statements known to key stakeholders, including citizens.*

100% of the Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of our legislative positions. Legislation is introduced or adopted that maintains or improves our financial position. The lobbyist contract is positively reviewed and demonstrates a return on investment. Key stakeholders demonstrate an understanding of the legislative positions taken by the County.

Objective 2: Implement processes and strategies to deal with operational budget deficits.

- *Adopt a budget calendar and provide information to the Board of Commissioners necessary to make key decisions.*
- *Identify financial threats and approve strategies to mitigate those threats.*
- *Fully fund the County financing tools.*
- *Eliminate operational budget deficits, adopting the budget by the end of October.*

Commissioners report that all necessary information is provided in a timely fashion. Financial threats are identified and strategies adopted to mitigate those threats. The financing tools are fully funded, with the exception of the stabilization fund, or rationale provided to justify less than fully funded status. Budgets are adopted by the end of October that eliminate operational budget deficits.

Objective 3: Reduce the negative impact of rising employee benefit costs on the budget.

- *Approve a strategy to eventually move to a defined contribution (DC) plan for new hires.*
- *Consider a report and adopt strategies to reduce health benefit costs.*
- *Implement a health management plan.*

Commissioners adopt a plan to eventually move to a defined contribution system for new hires. Commissioners adopt strategies to reduce the costs of the County health plan. Commissioners adopt a health management plan.

Objective 4: Maintain or improve bond ratings.

- *Continue to address budget deficits with pro-active, balanced approaches.*
- *Present thorough, high-quality information to bond rating agencies.*

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

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

Objective 1: Continue to improve the County website, miOttawa.

- Increase and improve the services that citizens can access and receive through the website.
- Examine the expanded use of social networking options that are linked to the website.
- Evaluate the value of the contract with our website contractor.
- Continue to use the Technology Committee to regularly review the status of the website.

The 2010 citizen survey reflects a 5% increase in citizens that report using miOttawa.org to communicate with or learn about Ottawa County government. The website contract is positively reviewed and supported by recommendation from the Technology Committee.

Objective 2: Review and update a comprehensive communication plan to maximize communication with citizens.

- Increase focus on receiving coverage on local radio and community television stations.
- Develop a report on the benefit of County property tax dollars.
- Evaluate the use of citizen budget meetings.
- Partner with local media to offer content for quality coverage.

The 2010 citizen survey reflects a 5% increase in citizens that report knowledge of revenue sharing and potential impacts of its loss. The 2010 citizen survey reflects that 40% of citizens report good awareness of County activities.

Objective 3: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with employee groups.

- Continue using the Front Page and all-staff e-mails to communicate important information to employees.
- Continue the Labor-Management Cooperation Committee.
- Continue and improve employee-edited newsletter.
- Continue brown-bag lunches and other information sessions.

Percentage of employees reporting satisfaction with County Administration continues to increase on the 2011 Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Objective 4: Continue to improve communication with Commissioners.

- Continue departmental annual report process.
- Evaluate use of paperless packets and other communication tools with Commissioners.

100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with communication from Administration.

Objective 5: Evaluate communication with other key stakeholders.

- Develop and implement a legislative action plan.
- Reexamine the role of Commissioners and staff in national, state and regional professional organizations and define the specific purpose of what we are to accomplish in those roles.
- Identify Commissioners to represent the County on NACO and MAC boards and committees.

100% of the Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of our legislative positions. Ottawa County, the Board of Commissioners, and staff are recognized as leaders and hold leadership positions in professional organizations.

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

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

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

Objective 1: Discuss and act upon road policy issues as appropriate.

- *Contact legislators and road officials, on relevant road-related legislation including the US-231 bridge and bypass.*
- *Communicate and coordinate with the road commission on relevant issues and to improve public understanding on roles.*

100% of legislators report understanding of County position on applicable issues. 100% of Commissioners report progress in public understanding of respective roles of the road commission and County.

Objective 2: Consider opportunities to improve economic development in the region.

- *Work with existing partners on regional economic development efforts, guided by the 2008 Economic Development Report.*
- *Continue work on developing an agriculture incubator.*
- *Work to maintain a presence of MSU Extension services in the County.*

100% of Commissioners report satisfaction that options to improve economic development in the region are being considered.

Objective 3: Continue initiatives to preserve the physical environment.

- *Continue efforts related to water quality.*
- *Continue to work with local units of government to seek funding opportunities for completing a groundwater resources inventory.*
- *Improve knowledge on drain issues.*
- *Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan.*
- *Continue to support completion of the Parks and Recreation Commission Parks and Recreation Plan.*

A plan of action with measurable results is developed from water quality research. 95% of attendees surveyed report the Water Quality Forum presented useful, relevant information. A county groundwater resources inventory is completed.

Objective 4: Continue initiatives to positively impact the community.

- *Continue involvement with the Purchase of Development Rights committee.*
- *Complete Urban Smart Growth demonstration project.*
- *Conduct build-out analysis for local government units.*
- *The Board of Commissioners will review the strategic plans of County departments and agencies, as requested by those entities, that provide direct services to the residents of the County.*

Complete Urban Smart Growth project. Complete build-out analysis for two local government units. Department strategic plans are reviewed by the Planning and Policy Committee.

Objective 5: Provide quality County facilities throughout the County.

- *Analyze the potential use of County land for additional communication tower leasing.*
- *Effectively maintain the existing facilities in the County.*

Commissioners consider report on use of additional land for communication tower leasing.

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

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

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

- Continue work on providing the most effective administration and funding for co-occurring mental health/substance abuse services.
- Conduct organizational efficiency and structure reviews, including;
 - Clerk/Register
 - Fiscal Services
 - Public Utilities
 - Veterans Services
- Complete evaluations of various programs and services, including;
 - Drug Courts
 - Jail Mental Health Task Force

100% of Commissioners report satisfaction that options to improve the administration of co-occurring mental health/substance abuse services has been examined. Commissioners receive a review and consider reports on the Clerk/Register of Deeds, Public Utilities, Fiscal Services and Veterans Services. Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the drug court pilot project. Commissioners receive a report from the Jail Mental Health Task Force.

Objective 2: Prioritize mandated and discretionary services.

- Communicate results of discretionary services ranking to funding recipients.
- Continue work towards a report on mandated services and service-levels and prioritize those results.

All recipients of discretionary funding are aware of the ranking of services, process used, and the potential impact of the loss of revenue sharing. Service levels are identified for all mandated services and results are ranked by Commissioners.

Objective 3: Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement systems.

- Analyze performance measurements submitted by each department to ensure the quality of outcomes.

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

Objective 4: Examine opportunities for service-delivery with local units of government.

- Examine possibilities for collaboration on service delivery with other local units of government.
- Make cost-effective services available to local units of government.

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

Objective 5: Ensure the continuity of government in the event of a disaster.

- Prepare a Continuity of Government Plan.
- Develop a records backup/disaster recovery plan for all records.

Commissioners adopt a "Continuity of Government" Plan which includes a disaster-recovery component for records.

Objective 6: Continue the effective and efficient management of human resources.

- Successfully recruit and hire a new Fiscal Services Director.
- Complete labor negotiations with applicable employee groups.
- Complete the review and update of the wage study process for applicable departments.

A new Fiscal Services Director has been hired. Labor contracts are completed prior to the expiration of the contract period. The wage study process has been completed for applicable departments.

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.		
Objective 1: Advocate on legislative issues to maintain and improve the financial position of the County.		
100% of the Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of our legislative positions.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
Legislation is introduced or adopted that maintains or improves our financial position.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
The lobbyist contract is positively reviewed and demonstrates a return on investment.	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
Key stakeholders demonstrate an understanding of the legislative positions taken by the County.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
Objective 2: Implement processes and strategies to deal with operational budget deficits.		
Commissioners report that all necessary information is provided in a timely fashion.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Financial threats are identified and strategies adopted to mitigate those threats.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
The financing tools are fully funded, with the exception of the stabilization fund, or rationale provided to justify less than fully funded status.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Budgets are adopted by the end of October that eliminate operational budget deficits.	10/31/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 3: Reduce the negative impact of rising employee benefit costs on the budget.		
Approve a strategy to eventually move to a defined contribution (DC) plan for new hires.	3/1/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Commissioners adopt strategies to reduce the costs of the County health plan.	10/31/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Commissioners adopt a health management plan.	10/31/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Objective 4: Maintain or improve bond ratings.		
100% of 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.		
Objective 1: Continue to improve the County website, miOttawa.		
The 2010 citizen survey reflects a 5% increase in citizens that report using miOttawa.org to communicate with or learn about Ottawa County government.	6/1/10	Administrator, Information Technology
The website contract is positively reviewed and supported by recommendation from the Technology Committee.	10/31/10	Administrator, Information Technology
Objective 2: Review and update a comprehensive communication plan to maximize communication with citizens		
The 2010 citizen survey reflects a 5% increase in citizens that report knowledge of revenue sharing and potential impacts of its loss.	6/1/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
The 2010 citizen survey reflects that 40% of citizens report good awareness of County activities.	6/1/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 3: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with employee groups.		
Percentage of employees reporting satisfaction with County Administration continues to increase on the 2011 Employee Satisfaction Survey.	7/1/11	Administrator, Administration Departments
Objective 4: Continue to improve communication with Commissioners.		
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with communication from Administration.	12/31/10	Administrator, Administration Departments
Objective 5: Evaluate communication with other key stakeholders.		
100% of the Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of our legislative positions.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
Ottawa County, the Board of Commissioners, and staff are recognized as leaders and hold leadership positions in professional organizations.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments

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.		
Objective 1: Discuss and act upon road policy issues as appropriate.		
100% of legislators report understanding of County position on applicable issues.	Ongoing	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
100% of Commissioners report progress in public understanding of respective roles of the road commission and County.	12/31/10	Administrator, Planning
Objective 2: Consider opportunities to improve economic development in the region.		
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction that options to improve economic development in the region are being considered.	12/31/10	Administrator, Planning
Objective 3: Continue initiatives to preserve the physical environment.		
A plan of action with measurable results is developed from water quality research.	12/31/10	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
95% of attendees surveyed report the Water Quality Forum presented useful, relevant information.	11/30/10	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
A county groundwater resources inventory is completed.	12/31/10	Planning
Objective 4: Continue initiatives to positively impact the community.		
Complete Urban Smart Growth project.	12/31/10	Planning
Complete build-out analysis for two local government units.	12/31/10	Planning
Department strategic plans are reviewed by the Planning and Policy Committee.	12/31/10	Administrator, Planning
Objective 5: Provide quality County facilities throughout the County.		
Commissioners consider report on use of additional land for communication tower leasing.	12/31/10	Administrator, Planning, IT, Fiscal Services
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.		
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction that options to improve the administration of co-occurring mental health/substance abuse services has been examined.	12/31/10	Administrator, CMH, Corporation Counsel
Commissioners consider the report regarding the potential combination of the offices of Clerk & Register of Deeds.	4/1/10	Administrator
Commissioners consider a report regarding the potential reorganization of Public Utilities.	12/31/10	Administrator, Planning, Corporation Counsel, Fiscal Services
Commissioners consider the Fiscal Services Organizational Study.	6/1/10	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services
Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the Drug Court pilot projects.	9/30/10	Planning
Commissioners receive a report from the Jail Mental Health Task Force.	12/31/10	Administrator, CMH, Planning, Sheriff
Commissioners consider a report regarding veterans services in the County.	8/1/10	Administrator
Objective 2: Prioritize mandated and discretionary services.		
All recipients of discretionary funding are aware of the ranking of services, process used, and the potential impact of the loss of revenue sharing.	10/31/10	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Service levels are identified for all mandated services and results are ranked by Commissioners.	11/1/10	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 3: Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement systems.		
100% of County departments use outcome-based performance measurements to make management and service decisions.	Ongoing	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services
Objective 4: Examine opportunities for service-delivery with local units of government.		
County services that are cost-effective to offer are made available to local units of government.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments
Objective 5: Ensure the continuity of government in the event of a disaster.		
Commissioners adopt a "Continuity of Government" Plan which includes a disaster-recovery component for records.	12/31/10	Administrator, All Departments
Objective 6: Continue the effective and efficient management of human resources.		
A new Fiscal Services Director has been hired.	6/1/10	Administrator, Human Resources
Labor contracts are completed prior to the expiration of the contract period.	12/31/10	Administrator, Human Resources
The wage study process has been completed for applicable departments.	12/31/10	Administrator, Human Resources