



# **OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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*Strategic Plan and 2017-2018 Business Plan*



## OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

*Back Row (Left to Right):* Donald G. Disselkoeen - District 3; Matthew R. Fenske - District 11; Mike Haverdink - District 5; Kelly M. Kuiper - District 6; Francisco C. Garcia - District 1; Philip D. Kuyers - District 9; Joseph S. Baumann - District 2

*Front Row (Left to Right):* Allen Dannenberg - District 4; Vice-Chair Roger A. Bergman - District 10; Chair Gregory J. DeJong - District 8; James H. Holtvluwer - District 7

Ottawa County, the eighth-largest county in Michigan, is a beautiful community of 282,250 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/Register of Deeds, Water Resources Commissioner, Prosecutor, 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 May 17, 2017, to review the current strategic plan and create the business plan for fiscal year 2017-2018. This involved a review of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) facing the County, a confirmation of major goals, and the development and ranking of objectives. 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:

**Where you belong.**

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 contribute to the long-term economic, social and environmental health of the County.**
- 3. To maintain and enhance communication with citizens, employees and other stakeholders.**
- 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 - 2018

## OBJECTIVES, DELIVERABLES, OUTPUTS, AND OUTCOMES

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*While goals are relatively static in nature, the objectives that assist in accomplishing the goals are likely to change annually. Deliverables are items that give further meaning and substance to an objective. Outputs are specific items of action and outcome indicators are a measure of success, demonstrating 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

- Communication with the public
- Financial strength
- Parks
- Job opportunities
- Fastest growing County in the State
- Agriculture/business
- Tourism
- Lakes - Lake Michigan
- Diversity of agriculture
- Commissioner involvement
- Culture
- Low millage
- Public safety
- Employees
- Employee training
- Good schools K-College (strong education opportunities)
- Community Mental Health services
- Great place to retire
- Respect
- Water resources
- Industry diversity
- Working with State Legislators
- Parks Foundation
- Presentation for Commissioners to share with local units

# OPPORTUNITIES

- Fastest growing County in State
- Creative approaches for redoing workspaces
- Creative ways to fund things with Insurance Authority
- CIP
- County property review
- Parks and Recreation
- Lowering millage (lowest millage in State without reducing services or maintenance)
- Fed and State legislators
- Continue to look for collaboration opportunities with local units
- Educational events for the public to learn about the County
- County-wide development plan

# WEAKNESSES

- Lack of secure funding for our CIP/buildings
- Fastest growing County: negative impacts and pressures, farmland and economy
- Groundwater challenges
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of skilled/unskilled labor
- Deteriorating infrastructure: roads, water, sewer, impacts on land development, eliminating farmland
- Threats to revenue sharing
- Unfunded mandates
- # of school districts
- Consumers Energy tax appeals, trending
- Staffing/leadership reflecting ethnic population of County
- Structure/pay/system lends itself to limited candidates for County Commissioner

# THREATS

- Parks and Recreation: if millage or other support ever goes away
- Tensions: desire for service levels and low tax rates
- Federal and State legislature
- Voters ability to do zoning referendums and negative impact on affordable housing
- Locals want park \$ in their local municipalities



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

Output  
Outcome Indicator

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

**Objective 1:** Maintain and improve current processes and implement new strategies to retain a **balanced budget**.

- Provide information to the Board necessary to make key decisions, adopting the budget by the end of September.
- Annually adopt the Capital Improvement Plan, identifying and prioritizing projects and the funding to pay for it.
- Annually review millage rates during the budget process.
- Continue to evaluate and adopt strategies to address remaining pension and retiree health liabilities.
- Continue strategies to contain the cost of health benefits, including; health plan design, bidding out our health plan to the market, and implementation of the health management plan.
- Identify financial threats and approve strategies to mitigate those threats.
- Maintain the health of the County financing tools.
- Maintain the health of the Insurance Authority, while investing funds for projects that lower County liabilities.

Board receives financial information in a timely fashion in order to adopt and monitor the budget.  
Board reviews the Capital Improvement Plan, developing a funding strategy for future facility and equipment needs.  
Board adopts strategies regarding pension/retiree health liabilities and the cost of health benefits.  
Board reviews information on the financing tools, including the Insurance Authority.

Budgets are adopted on time without deficits.  
The County is able to fund facility and equipment needs.  
Pension and retiree liabilities are fully funded.  
Cost of employee benefits are lower than benchmarks.  
The County financing tools are fully funded, helping to keep the general operating millage rate lower than comparable counties.

**Objective 2:** Maintain and improve the financial position of the County through **legislative advocacy**.

- Maintain a list of legislative priorities with regular tracking and reporting to the Board.
- Maintain legislative positions with associated talking points that can be used with legislators, the public and other stakeholders.
- Coordinate legislative actions with our lobbyist and the Michigan Association of Counties.
- Continue meeting with our legislators to maintain and enhance relationships and County influence in State decisions.
- In accordance with legislative protocols, focus efforts to preserve and enhance the budgetary and administrative authority of the County, enhance the fiscal position of the County and court system, and maintain or increase current levels of revenue sharing.

Legislative priorities and position statements are maintained to guide the work of Commissioners, staff, lobbyist and MAC. Staff and lobbyist provide regular updates to the Board. Meetings are regularly held with our legislators to maintain relationships and County influence.

County legislative position statements are used by stakeholders in the legislative process.  
The County has positive relationships with our legislators.  
Positive legislation is adopted and negative legislation defeated.

**Objective 3:** Maintain or improve **bond credit ratings**.

- Maintain a balanced budget with pro-active strategies.
- Present high-quality information to bond rating agencies.
- Continue to strive for "triple-triple" bond ratings.

Board adopts a balanced budget.  
Communicate with bond rating agencies as scheduled.

Achieve and maintain the top ratings from all rating agencies.



**GOAL 2: TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OF THE COUNTY.**



WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

**Objective 1:** Consider initiatives that contribute to the **economic** health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.

- Continued involvement and support of the Housing Next coalition addressing the shortage of affordable housing.
- Facilitate work with the State, Road Commission and local units of government to plan for future phasing of M-231.
- Maintain regular communication and the relationship with the Road Commission.
- Continue work to facilitate and support a county-wide approach and contribution to economic development in the County.
- Recognize and support the role of agriculture in our economy through efforts like the ACRE AgTech business incubator.

**Objective 2:** Consider initiatives that contribute to the **social** health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.

- Address current issues, including: the opioid epidemic, increasing suicide rates and the funding/provision of mental health services.
- Continue to provide for the health of residents in the County through the Department of Public Health and Community Mental Health.
- Continue to provide for public safety in the County through the work of the Sheriff, Prosecutor and Courts.
- Walk the talk of our vision "Where You Belong", providing cultural intelligence training for employees so that the County is a welcoming place that supports a globally diverse workforce in our community.

**Objective 3:** Consider initiatives that contribute to the **environmental** health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.

- Evaluate next steps with the Southwest Ottawa County landfill.
- Complete the groundwater resources study and evaluate next steps.
- Convene stakeholders to develop a countywide development plan and approach for infrastructure and funding (water/sewer/etc.).
- Continue to support the work of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the new Parks Foundation.
- Continued support of the Agricultural Preservation Board, discussing options to more aggressively pursue farmland preservation.
- Continue efforts related to water quality and beach sand quality.
- Review and report on the status of the County being part of multiple Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

The Board is regularly updated on the Housing Next initiative. The Board is updated on M-231 work and has regular meetings with the Road Commission. The Board is represented, funds, and is regularly updated about economic development activities.

Workers can find affordable housing in the County. The condition of roads are rated well in citizen surveys. Businesses succeed and thrive, contributing to low unemployment rates and high personal income rates. Agriculture continues as an economic driver, with the County ranked in the top three producers statewide.

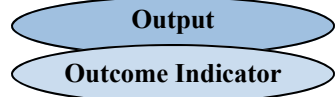
Board stays updated on current issues and the work by departments in areas of public health, mental health and public safety. Cultural intelligence training provided for all employees.

County retains low crime rates and high health rankings. Citizen surveys reflect continued high satisfaction regarding public safety and health. Diverse peoples are welcomed and stay in the County.

Board reviews options to remediate the SW County landfill. Groundwater study is completed. Board meeting to discuss a countywide development plan. Board stays updated on current issues and the work of the Parks Commission. Water Quality Forum held. Discuss options and current efforts to pursue farmland preservation. Board reviews report on Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

County is proactively addressing potential issues and preserving the natural environment. Citizen surveys reflect continued satisfaction with living in Ottawa County.

**GOAL 3: TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS, EMPLOYEES, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.**



WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

Objective 1: Regularly review and update **communication strategies** that guide the work of the County in this goal area.

- Provide regular updates to the Board regarding communications and the work of the communications manager.
- Complete the “rebranding” project.
- Consider and evaluate new opportunities and methods of communication with stakeholders.

Board is regularly updated on communication strategies. The rebranding project is implemented.

County is regularly monitoring, evaluating and changing communication strategies to maximize impact with stakeholders. Citizen and employee surveys demonstrate satisfaction with County communications.

Objective 2: Maximize communication with **citizens.**

- Provide talking points for Commissioners on various topics for use when interacting with the public and other stakeholders.
- Evaluate existing and new technology and initiatives to improve engagement with citizens; including social media and GovDelivery.
- Develop additional informational pieces to inform citizens about their Commissioners, the County relationship with the Road Commission, and other topics.
- Continue to improve [www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org), increasing and improving the information and services that citizens can access.
- Provide timely and thorough information updates on key issues and events, like the M-231 project.

Commissioners regularly receive talking points. Regularly evaluate work and metrics on social media initiatives, GovDelivery and [www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org). Provide event specific and other informational communication pieces as needed.

Indicators in the citizen survey, and metrics from GovDelivery/[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)/social media, reflect increased knowledge of County activities and satisfaction with communication.

Objective 3: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with **employees.**

- Continue to develop and use effective methods for communications with employees, including; newsletters, employee portal and all-staff emails.
- Continue the Labor-Management Cooperation Committee.
- Continue brown-bag lunches and other information sessions.

Administration maintains consistency with effective means of communication with employees.

Employee engagement surveys reflect an increase in overall employee engagement.

Objective 4: Evaluate communication with **other key stakeholders.**

- Meet with community leaders on a regular basis, increasing the involvement of Commissioners with the community.
- Continue the M-231 run and evaluate other community building events, like an “Ice Cream Cone with Your Commissioner” event.
- Continue communications with local units of government, including the use of legislative forums and all-unit meetings.
- Encourage Commissioner attendance at next Officers’ Compensation Commission meetings.

Board regularly receives a calendar of community events, increasing involvement and exposure in the community. Regularly communicate with local units of government.

The County has good relationships with local units of government and other entities in the community.

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

Output  
Outcome Indicator

**Objective 1:** Conduct activities and maintain systems to **continuously improve** to gain efficiencies and improve effectiveness.

- Continue and enhance the "4 C's" initiative.
- Develop and incorporate systems of creativity (continuous improvement and innovation) for all employees.
- Complete broadband assessment and technology action plan.

The "4 C's" initiatives become part of the organizational culture. The broadband assessment/plan is completed.

Employees are actively involved in the continuous improvement of County processes and services.

**Objective 2:** Continue to perform **program evaluations** and implement **outcome-based performance measurement systems.**

- Conduct organizational efficiency/structure reviews and program evaluations, including;
  - Regional Transit Study                      -SWAP
  - Jail Billing    -Others as needed
  - Sobriety/Drug Courts
- Continue to improve performance measurement systems and benchmarks relative to budgeted resources.
- Continue to maintain and improve dashboards and other reports to increase transparency and demonstrate outcomes.

Board considers program evaluations. Budget is adopted with outcome-based performance measurements incorporated. Dashboards are utilized to help demonstrate outcomes.

Budgets are adopted based upon demonstrated outcomes. Results are collected which demonstrate yearly and cumulative totals of both effective programs and services confirmed and savings from the improvement and/or elimination of ineffective programs and services.

**Objective 3:** Maintain and expand investments in the **human resources** and talent of the organization.

- Continue to develop approaches to attract and retain talent, including elements such as; competitive wages, benefit packages and flexible work environments.
- Continue to develop approaches to expand and retain a diverse workforce.
- Continue the investment in employee training and development through the training program and tuition reimbursement.
- Successfully complete union negotiations.
- Review employee recognition programs.

The Board considers approaches regarding talent attraction and retention. Training and development programs are maintained and improved. Union negotiations are completed on time. The Board reviews the employee recognition program.

Ottawa County is recognized for excellent customer service. Ottawa County is competitive for talent and viewed as an employer of choice. The employee engagement survey reflects satisfied and engaged employees.

**Objective 4:** Examine opportunities for increased **cooperation and collaboration** with local government and other partners.

- Examine and evaluate possibilities for collaboration on services and make cost-effective services available to units of government.
- Continue to improve culture of collaboration and teamwork among county departments/agencies/courts.

Collaboration opportunities and teamwork among county departments are consistently expanded.

Ottawa County is recognized as a region of excellence for government collaboration.

WHAT WILL WE DO TO GET THERE?

# ASSIGNED RESOURCES AND DEADLINES

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

Ottawa County Board of Commissioners  
Business Plan: Deadlines and Resources

	<b>Projected Completion</b>	<b>Resources Assigned</b>
<b>Goal 1: To Maintain and Improve the Strong Financial Position of the County.</b>		
<b>Objective 1: Maintain and improve current processes and implement new strategies to retain a balanced</b>		
Board receives financial information in a timely fashion in order to adopt and monitor the budget.	9/26/17	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Board reviews the Capital Improvement Plan, developing a funding strategy for future facility and equipment needs.	4/1/18	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Facilities
Board adopts strategies regarding pension/retiree health liabilities and the cost of health benefits.	4/1/18	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Human Resources
Board reviews information on the financing tools, including the Insurance Authority.	9/26/17	Administrator, Fiscal Services
<b>Objective 2: Maintain and improve the financial position of the County through legislative advocacy.</b>		
Legislative priorities and position statements are maintained to guide the work of Commissioners, staff, lobbyist and MAC.	Ongoing	Administrator
Staff and lobbyist provide regular updates to the Board.	Ongoing	Administrator
Meetings are regularly held with our legislators to maintain relationships and County influence.	Ongoing	Administrator
<b>Objective 3: Maintain or improve bond credit ratings.</b>		
Board adopts a balanced budget.	9/26/17	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Communicate with bond rating agencies as scheduled.	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services
<b>Goal 2: To Contribute to the Long-Term Economic, Social and Environmental Health of the County.</b>		
<b>Objective 1: Consider initiatives that contribute to the economic health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.</b>		
The Board is regularly updated on the Housing Next initiative.	Ongoing	Administrator
The Board is updated on M-231 work and has regular meetings with the Road Commission.	Ongoing	Administrator, Planning
The Board is represented, funds, and is regularly updated about economic development activities.	Ongoing	Administrator
<b>Objective 2: Consider initiatives that contribute to the social health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.</b>		
Board stays updated on current issues and the work by departments in areas of public health, mental health and public safety.	Ongoing	Administrator, Sheriff, Courts, Prosecutor, Public Health and Community Mental Health
Cultural intelligence training provided for all employees.	Ongoing	Human Resources
<b>Objective 3: Consider initiatives that contribute to the environmental health and sustainability of the County and its' residents.</b>		
Board reviews options to remediate the SW County landfill.	7/1/18	Administrator, Public Health, Public Utilities
Groundwater study is completed.	3/31/18	Administrator, Planning
Board meeting to discuss a countywide development plan.	12/31/17	Administrator, Public Utilities, Planning
Board stays updated on current issues and the work of the Parks Commission.	Ongoing	Parks
Water Quality Forum held.	11/30/17	Administrator, Parks, MSU Ext., Public Health
Discuss options and current efforts to pursue farmland preservation.	12/31/17	Administrator, Planning
Board reviews updated report on Metropolitan Planning Organizations.	4/30/18	Administrator, Planning

Ottawa County Board of Commissioners  
Business Plan: Deadlines and Resources

	<b>Projected Completion</b>	<b>Resources Assigned</b>
<b>Goal 3: To Maintain and Enhance Communication with Citizens, Employees, &amp; other Stakeholders.</b>		
<b>Objective 1 : Regularly review and update communication strategies that guide the work of the County in this goal area.</b>		
Board is regularly updated on communication strategies.	Ongoing	Administrator
The rebranding project is implemented.	3/1/18	Administrator
<b>Objective 2 : Maximize communication with citizens.</b>		
Commissioners regularly receive talking points.	Ongoing	Administrator
Regularly evaluate work and metrics on social media initiatives, GovDelivery and www.miOttawa.org.	Ongoing	Administrator, IT
Provide event specific and other informational communication pieces as needed.	Ongoing	Administrator
<b>Objective 3 : Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with employees.</b>		
Administration maintains consistency with effective means of communication with employees.	Ongoing	Administrator, Administration Departments
<b>Objective 4 : Evaluate communication with other key stakeholders.</b>		
Board regularly receives a calendar of community events, increasing involvement and exposure in the community.	Ongoing	Administrator
Regularly communicate with local units of government.	Ongoing	Administrator
<b>Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.</b>		
<b>Objective 1 : Conduct activities and maintain systems to continuously improve to gain efficiencies and improve effectiveness.</b>		
The "4 C's" initiatives become part of the organizational culture.	Ongoing	Administrator, Human Resources
The broadband assessment/plan is completed.	2/1/18	Planning
<b>Objective 2: Continue to perform program evaluations and implement outcome-based performance measurement systems.</b>		
Board considers conducting another Regional Transit Study.	3/1/18	Planning
Board considers jail billing report.	1/31/18	Administrator, Fiscal, Planning
Board considers report on the Sobriety/Drug Courts.	4/30/18	Administrator, Planning, Courts
Board considers report on the SWAP program.	3/31/18	Administrator, Planning, Sheriff
Budget is adopted with outcome-based performance measurements incorporated.	9/26/17	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning
Dashboards are utilized to help demonstrate outcomes.	Ongoing	Administrator, Planning
<b>Objective 3 : Maintain and expand investments in the human resources and talent of the organization.</b>		
The Board considers approaches regarding talent attraction and retention.	Ongoing	Administrator, Human Resources
Training and development programs are maintained and improved.	Ongoing	Human Resources
Union negotiations are completed on time.	12/31/17	Administrator, Human Resources
The Board reviews the employee recognition program.	5/1/18	Administrator, Human Resources
<b>Objective 4: Examine opportunities for increased cooperation and collaboration with local government and other partners.</b>		
Collaboration opportunities and teamwork among county departments are consistently expanded.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments