



Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

Strategic Plan and 2012 Business Plan



Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

Back Row (Left to Right): Donald G. Disselkoen - District 8; Jane M. Ruiter - District 4;
Joseph S. Baumann - District 7; Robert W. Karsten - District 9;
Greg J. DeJong - District 5; Stu P. Visser - District 1; James H. Holtvluer - District 11

Front Row (Left to Right): Dennis W. Swartout - District 3;
Chair Philip D. Kuyers - District 2; Vice-Chair James C. Holtrop - District 10;
Roger G. Rycenga - District 6

Ottawa County, the eighth-largest county in Michigan, is a beautiful community of 263,801 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 February 14, 2012, to create the business plan for 2012. 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.**

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 - 2012

Objectives, Deliverables, Outputs, and Outcomes

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

- 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
- Website
- Open Space
- Broadband → coverage as % of county

OPPORTUNITIES

- Legislative activity - lobbyist to develop proactive strategies
- Local government communication, relations and assistance
- 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)
- 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
- Revenue sharing and finances
- Legislative plan to get state change(s)
- Improve transit, conduct corridor studies
- Growing anti-tax sentiment
- Distribution of Park Land

WEAKNESSES

- 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

THREATS

- 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
- Green industry overkill, need to keep goal of a diverse economy
- Amount of non-taxable land
- Loss of personal property tax
- Right to work laws

Goal 1: To Maintain and Improve the Strong Financial Position of the County.

Output

Outcome Indicator

Objective 1: Maintain and improve the financial position of the County through **legislative advocacy.**

- Advocate to achieve the full reinstatement of revenue sharing and mitigate any negative impacts of the shift of this funding to the Economic Vitality Incentive Program (EVIP).
- Identify other legislation (Personal Property Tax) that impacts our financial position, develop clear position statements on those issues and communicate those position statements to legislators.
- Find ways to maximize the services of our lobbyist contract and communicate the outputs and outcomes achieved.
- Advocate to achieve full funding of mandates.

Produce position statements that clearly outline our issues.
Conduct a survey of our legislative delegation on various issues.
Lobbyist provides quarterly legislative updates to the Board.

Revenue sharing is not further cut and eventually fully restored.
Positive legislation adopted and negative legislation defeated.
The Board affirms the value of the lobbyist contract.
Legislation is adopted that more fully funds mandates.

Objective 2: Implement processes and strategies to address operational **budget deficits** with pro-active, balanced approaches.

- Adopt a budget calendar and provide information to the Board necessary to make key decisions.
- Eliminate operational budget deficits, adopting the budget by the end of October.
- Identify financial threats and approve strategies to mitigate those threats.
- Maintain the health of the County financing tools.
- Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan, focusing on long term economic, social and environmental health.

Adopt a budget calendar and adhere to established timelines.
Provide information to the Board in a timely fashion.
Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan.

Budgets are adopted without deficits.
The County financing tools are fully funded.
The County can financially meet the needs of current residents without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Objective 3: Approve strategies to reduce the negative impact of rising **employee benefit costs** on the budget.

- Continue to implement the strategy to move employee groups to a defined contribution (DC) plan for new hires.
- Continue strategies to contain health benefit costs, including evaluation of our health plan designs and bidding out our health plan to the market.
- Complete implementation of the health management plan.

More employee groups are moved to a DC plan for new hires.
Board considers strategies regarding health costs.
The health management plan is implemented.

Employee benefit costs rise at a rate lower than established benchmarks.

Objective 4: Maintain or improve **bond ratings.**

- Continue to address budget deficits with pro-active, balanced approaches.
- 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.

What will we do to get there?

Goal 2: To Maintain and Enhance Communication with Citizens, Employees, and Other Stakeholders.

Output
Outcome Indicator

Objective 1: Maintain a comprehensive **communication plan** that guides the work of the County in this goal area.

- *Develop and implement the work and responsibilities of the pilot marketing and communications manager.*
- *Evaluate and consider expanding the pilot marketing and communications manager position.*

Board considers an updated Communications Plan.
Board considers the communications position.

Indicators in the citizen and employee surveys and website metrics reflect increased knowledge of County activities and satisfaction with communication.

Objective 2: Continue to improve **www.miOttawa.org**.

- *Increase and improve the services that citizens can access and receive through the website.*
- *Continue to expand the use of social media initiatives that are linked to and complement the website.*

Regularly review work on the website and social media initiatives, tracking metrics to measure progress.

The 2012 citizen survey reflects an increase in citizen use of website.

Objective 3: Review existing and implement new strategies to maximize communication with **citizens**.

- *Evaluate the use of citizen budget meetings and other existing initiatives.*
- *Increase our focus on improving local media coverage.*
- *Develop a report on the benefit of County property tax dollars.*
- *Develop and promote a speakers bureau.*

Conduct citizen budget meetings.
Focus on improving local media coverage.
Board considers a "Property Tax Dollar" report.
A speakers bureau is established and promoted.

The 2012 citizen survey reflects an increase in citizen awareness of County activities.

Objective 4: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with **employees**.

- *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.*

Administration maintains consistency with brown bag luncheons, newsletters, Labor-Management meetings and other means to communicate with employees.

The 2013 employee satisfaction survey reflects an increase in overall employee satisfaction.

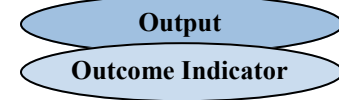
Objective 5: Evaluate communication with **other key stakeholders**.

- *Evaluate use of paperless packets and other communication tools with Commissioners.*
- *Continue departmental annual report process.*
- *Maintain and implement a legislative action plan.*
- *Evaluate communications with local units of government, including the use of quadrant meetings.*

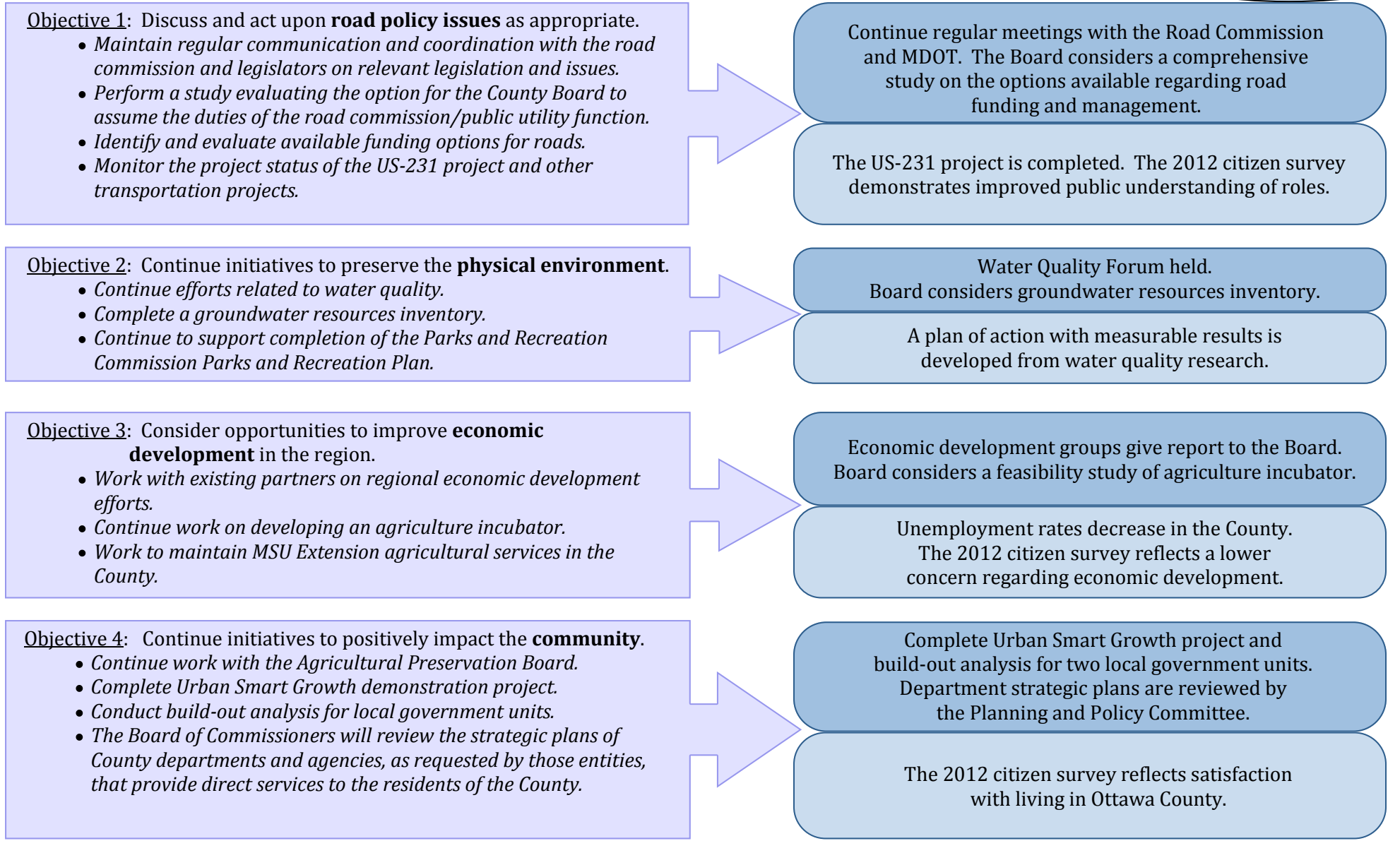
Conduct a survey of the Board rating communication.
The Board adopts and monitors a legislative action plan.
Quadrant meetings are held on a regular basis.

Commissioners report satisfaction with communication from Administration. Ottawa County is viewed as a leader for best management practices and collaborative efforts.

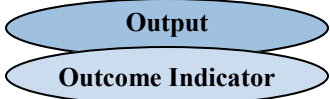
Goal 3: To Contribute to a Healthy Physical, Economic, & Community Environment.



What will we do to get there?



Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.



What will we do to get there?

Objective 1: Maintain systems and programs of **continuous improvement** to gain efficiencies and improve effectiveness.

- Develop and incorporate a system of continuous improvement through the Administrator's Office.
- 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;
 - Road Commission/Public Utilities
 - ERP System
 - IT Study
 - E Ticketing
- Complete evaluations of various programs and services, including;
 - CBT
 - SWAP
 - Drug Courts
 - Jail Mental Health Task Force

A system of continuous improvement is implemented. Board considers reports on all of the named reviews and evaluations.

Results are collected which demonstrate yearly and cumulative totals of both effective programs and services confirmed and savings from the elimination of ineffective programs and services.

Objective 2: Continue implementation of **outcome-based performance measurement systems.**

- Continue to work with departments to improve performance measurement systems and benchmarks, relative to budgeted resources.
- Continue work towards a report on mandated services and service-levels and prioritize those results.
- Continue to develop and improve dashboards and other reports to increase transparency and demonstrate outcomes.

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

Budgets are adopted based upon demonstrated outcomes.

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

- Develop and maintain an Ottawa County standard for internal and external customer service, training employees on the standard.
- Pursue partners in the community to assist the organization to ask questions about and improve our cultural competency.
- Examine programs from other communities and evaluate potential for an expanded volunteer programming.

A customer service standard is implemented with training. Programs are implemented to improve cultural competency. An expanded volunteer program is evaluated.

Ottawa County is recognized for high customer service. Ottawa County is globally competitive for the talent of diverse cultures. Ottawa County has an active and effective volunteer base.

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

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

Options presented to local units regarding shared service opportunities.

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

Assigned Resources and Deadlines

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**

	Projected Completion	Resources Assigned
Goal 1: To Maintain and Improve the Strong Financial Position of the County.		
Objective 1: Maintain and improve the financial position of the County through legislative advocacy.		
Produce position statements that clearly outline our issues.	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning
Conduct a survey of our legislative delegation on various issues.	12/31/12	Administrator
Lobbyist provides quarterly legislative updates to the Board.	Ongoing	Administrator, Planning
Objective 2: Implement processes and strategies to address operational budget deficits with pro-active, balanced approaches.		
Adopt a budget calendar and adhere to established timelines.	11/1/12	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Provide information to the Board in a timely fashion.	11/1/12	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Develop a comprehensive sustainability plan.	4/1/13	Administrator
Objective 3: Approve strategies to reduce the negative impact of rising employee benefit costs on the budget.		
More employee groups are moved to a DC plan for new hires.	7/1/13	Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Board considers strategies regarding health costs.	Ongoing	Board, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
The health management plan is implemented.	12/31/12	Administrator, Human Resources
Objective 4: Maintain or improve bond ratings.		
Board adopts a balanced budget.	Ongoing	Board, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Communicate with bond rating agencies as scheduled.	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Goal 2: To Maintain and Enhance Communication with Citizens, Employees, & other Stakeholders.		
Objective 1: Maintain a comprehensive communication plan that guides the work of the County in this goal area.		
Board considers an updated Communications Plan.	12/31/12	Administrator
Board considers the communications position.	11/1/12	Board, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 2: Continue to improve www.miOttawa.org.		
Regularly review work on the website and social media initiatives, tracking metrics to measure progress.	Ongoing	Administrator, IT
Objective 3: Review existing and implement new strategies to maximize communication with citizens.		
Conduct citizen budget meetings.	7/1/12	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Focus on improving local media coverage.	Ongoing	Administrator
Board considers a "Property Tax Dollar" report.	12/31/12	Administrator, Fiscal Services
A speakers bureau is established and promoted.	7/1/12	Administrator
Objective 4: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with employees.		
Administration maintains consistency with brown bag luncheons, newsletters, Labor-Management meetings and other means to communicate with employees.	Ongoing	Administrator, Administration Departments
Objective 5: Evaluate communication with other key stakeholders.		
Conduct a survey of the Board rating communication.	12/31/12	Administrator
The Board adopts and monitors a legislative action plan.	Ongoing	Board, Administrator, Planning
Quadrant meetings are held on a regular basis.	Ongoing	Administrator

**Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
Business Plan: Deadlines and Resources**

	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.		
Continue regular meetings with the Road Commission and MDOT.	Ongoing	Board, Administrator
The Board considers a comprehensive study on the options available regarding road funding and management.	TBD	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services, Corporation Counsel
Objective 2 : Continue initiatives to preserve the physical environment.		
Water Quality Forum held.	11/1/12	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
Board considers groundwater resources inventory.	12/31/13	Administrator, Planning
Objective 3 : Consider opportunities to improve economic development in the region.		
Economic development groups give report to the Board.	12/31/12	Administrator, Planning
Board considers a feasibility study of agriculture incubator.	12/31/12	Administrator, Planning
Objective 4 : Continue initiatives to positively impact the community.		
Complete Urban Smart Growth project.	7/1/13	Planning
Complete build-out analysis for two local government units.	7/1/12	Planning
Department strategic plans are reviewed by the Planning and Policy Committee.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments
Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.		
Objective 1 : Maintain systems and programs of continuous improvement to gain efficiencies and improve effectiveness.		
A system of continuous improvement is implemented.	4/1/13	Administrator
Board considers report on administration of co-occurring mental health/substance abuse services.	12/31/12	Administrator, CMH, Corporation Counsel
Board considers report on Road Commission/Public Utilities.	TBD	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services, Corporation Counsel
Board considers report on IT Study.	10/1/12	Administrator, IT
Board considers report on the ERP System.	12/31/13	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Board considers report on the E-Ticketing System.	7/1/12	Administrator, Planning, IT, Sheriff
Board considers report on the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Program.	7/1/12	Planning, Community Corrections
Board considers report on Drug Courts.	7/1/12	Planning
Board considers report on Sentenced Work Abatement Program (SWAP).	12/31/12	Planning, Sheriff
Board considers report on the Jail Mental Health Task Force.	12/31/12	Administrator, CMH, Planning, Sheriff
Objective 2 : Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement systems.		
Budget is adopted with outcome-based performance measurements incorporated.	11/1/12	Board, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Dashboards are utilized to help demonstrate outcomes.	Ongoing	Administrator, Planning
Objective 3 : Maintain and expand investments in the human resources of the organization.		
A customer service standard is implemented with training.	4/1/13	Administrator
Programs are implemented to improve cultural competency.	4/1/13	Administrator
An expanded volunteer program is evaluated.	12/31/13	Administrator, Human Resources
Objective 4: Examine opportunities for service-delivery with local units of government.		
Options presented to local units regarding shared service opportunities.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments