



OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Strategic Plan and 2009 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; 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; Chair Donald G. Disselkoen - District 8;
Vice-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 5, 2009, to create the business plan for 2009. This involved an update of objectives for 2009 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 - 2009

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 and infrastructure
- 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

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of a coordinated communication/education plan for effective communication on county services
- Lack of Diversity
- Poor transportation/infrastructure system with inadequate funding
- Need for increased regional cooperation
- 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
- State recession
- State government
- Workforce unprepared, inadequate for future jobs
- Lack of countywide mass transit, especially to County facilities, rural areas
- Three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- No sustainability plan, look at paperless agendas
- Balancing quality-of-life with growth
- Managing growth to keep open spaces

OPPORTUNITIES

- Legislative activity - lobbyist to develop proactive strategies
- Local government communication, relations and assistance
- Examine use of a legislative standing committee
- Economic development (Pfizer plant, energy, agriculture)
- Enhance communication plan - website, newspaper, radio, schools
- Sustainable thinking - "going green", recycling, cost savings
- Growth in health care industry
- Regional thinking, planning and connections
- 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
- Bring balance to regulation in economic climate
- Provision of infrastructure
- Increase funding for mandated services
- Revenue sharing and finances

THREATS

- Financial state of the economy - unemployment
- Loss of revenue sharing
- Crisis in the housing industry, foreclosures
- Rising pension and health care costs
- Financial sustainability of parks
- 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
- New sales and business taxes

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

Objective 1: Continue to work at the State and Federal levels to address unfunded and under-funded mandates.

- Advocate to remove obstacles that prevent full funding of mandates.
- Gather data with other counties to use with the mandated services study to gain full funding of mandates.

100% of Ottawa legislative delegation oppose new under-funded or unfunded mandates and support fully funding existing mandates. 100% of legislators vote to remove obstacles and loopholes that prevent full funding of mandates.

Objective 2: Continue to advocate that the State remain committed to continuing revenue sharing payments to counties.

- Inform the public of the impact of the loss of revenue sharing.
- Continue to monitor appropriations bills.
- Continue to act at the State level.

Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of the County's position on the issue and all vote to retain revenue sharing.

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

- Complete the report which analyzes potential changes to the MERS Defined Benefit Plan.
- Complete a report which analyzes potential changes to the County health plan.

Commissioners consider a plan to address the future cost of the MERS Defined Benefit Retirement System. A plan is presented to Commissioners that addresses the County health plan expense.

Objective 4: Implement and continue processes to ensure appropriate staffing levels and pay.

- Complete the wage and classification study process.
- Implement process to review every position as it becomes vacant.

100% of wage study work is completed. Processes are in place to regularly review classifications and every position as it becomes vacant.

Objective 5: Maintain or improve bond ratings.

- 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.

Objective 6: Identify and develop strategies to address potential financial threats.

- Research and develop a plan to address existing and future financial threats which clearly identifies threats and solutions.
- Fully fund financing tools.
- Develop a plan to address the 5-year projected budget deficit.
- Monitor State and Federal legislation for financial implications.
- Make a determination whether to change fiscal years to a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year.

Commissioners approve a strategy to address financial threats, financing tools are fully funded, and the operational budget deficit is eliminated, and legislation is supported or opposed as appropriate. Commissioners consider a study to change fiscal years.

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

Objective 1: Develop and implement a comprehensive legislative action plan to communicate with legislators.

- *Develop action plan and implement plan with lobbyist and MAC.*
- *Evaluate the use of legislative breakfast meetings.*

State legislators report understanding of the County's positions on various issues within the Legislative Plan. Commissioners positively evaluate the lobbyist contract.

Objective 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to communicate with the public.

- *Develop a communication plan for approval of the Commission, examining current and new methods of communication.*
- *Continue to inform and mobilize the public around the potential impacts of the loss of state revenue sharing.*
- *Evaluate and recommend regarding: miOttawa.org, citizens academy, youth/school involvement in government, citizen interaction with the budget process and Administrator blog.*

Commissioners approve a comprehensive communications plan. 25% of citizens report knowledge of revenue sharing and potential impacts of its loss. 40% of citizens report good awareness of County activities. 25% of citizens report using miOttawa.org to communicate with or learn about Ottawa County government.

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 Labor-Management Cooperation Committee.*
- *Continue and improve employee-edited newsletter.*
- *Continue brown-bag lunches, benefit meetings, and other information sessions.*

Percentage of employees reporting satisfaction with County Administration increases by 5% on 2009 Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Objective 4: Continue to improve communication with Commissioners.

- *Continue departmental annual report process.*
- *Survey Commissioners regarding their communication needs.*
- *Complete a cost-benefit analysis of the use of paperless agendas.*

100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with communication from Administration. Commissioners consider a cost-benefit analysis of paperless agendas.

Objective 5: Identify and appoint the best applicants to boards and commissions.

- *Continue and improve board and commission interview process.*
- *Develop database to manage appointment process.*

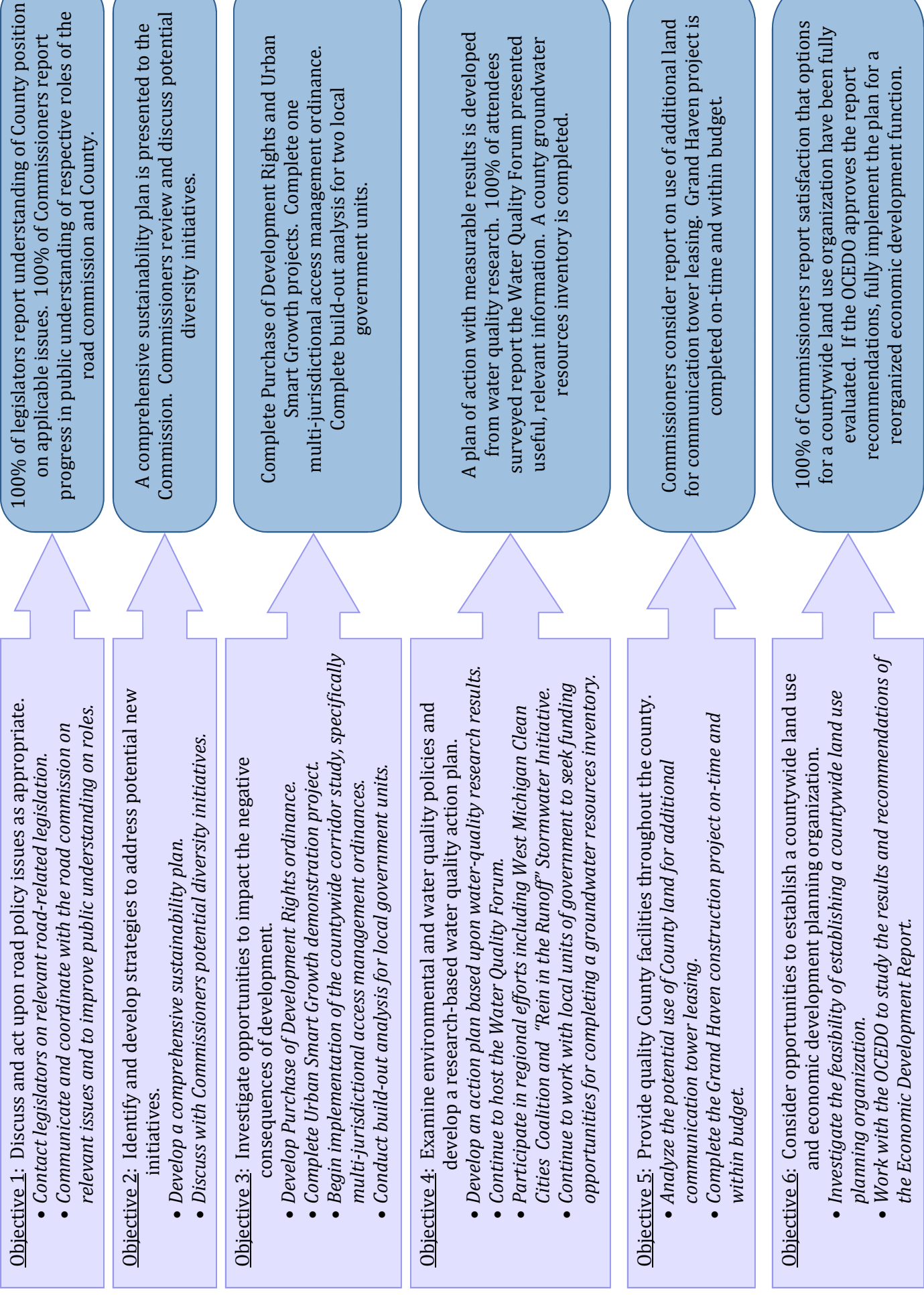
100% of applicants are interviewed prior to appointment. 100% of available board and commission seats are filled.

Objective 6: Strengthen role in state, regional and national professional organizations.

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

Ottawa County, the Board of Commissioners, and staff are recognized as leaders and hold leadership positions in professional organizations.

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



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, Public Utilities and Fiscal Services.*
- *Evaluate drug courts and services to veterans.*
- *Continue the work of the Jail Mental Health Task Force.*

Commissioners receive a review and consider reports on the Clerk/Register of Deeds, Public Utilities and Fiscal Services. Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the drug court pilot project and veterans services. Commissioners receive a report from the Jail Mental Health Task Force.

Objective 2: Evaluate substance abuse funding, service structure, and community needs.

- *Evaluate options for providing substance abuse services.*
- *Complete internal evaluation of PA 2 allocation effectiveness.*
- *Complete external review of Lakeshore Coordinating Council to determine appropriate vehicle for administering funds.*

100% of Commissioners are satisfied that substance abuse services and funding are appropriately funded and evaluated.

Objective 3: Prioritize mandated and discretionary services.

- *Communicate results of discretionary services ranking to funding recipients.*
- *Complete study of mandated services service-levels and prioritize 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 4: Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement system.

- *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 5: Establish better employee-management communications.

- *Continue Labor-Management Cooperation Committee.*
- *Continue employee newsletter, brown-bag lunches, benefit presentations, employee potlucks, and other communication efforts.*
- *Complete disease management and health coach study.*

100% of regularly-attending Labor-Management Cooperation Committee members report improved sense of communication between labor and management and report greater understanding of issues facing the County. 5% increase in employee satisfaction with "climate of trust". A disease management plan is presented to the Commission.

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

Objective 6: Examine opportunities for offering services to local units of government.

- *Complete a report on the benefit of County tax dollars.*
- *Analyze opportunities to offer services such as imaging, assessing, training, miOttawa.org, and others to local units of government.*

Commissioners consider report on benefit of County tax dollars. 100% of County services that are cost-effective to offer are made available to local units of government.

Objective 7: 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.*
- *Develop a policy and procedures for record storage controls.*
- *Evaluate compliance with record retention and storage mandates.*

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

Objective 8: Complete labor negotiations with applicable employee groups.

- *Complete labor negotiations with the remaining groups.*

Remaining labor contracts are renewed by May 1, 2009.

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: Continue to work at the State and Federal levels to address unfunded and under-funded mandates.	
100% of Ottawa legislative delegation oppose new under-funded or unfunded mandates and support fully funding existing mandates.	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
100% of legislators vote to remove obstacles and loopholes that prevent full funding of mandates.	Administrator, Fiscal Services, Planning, Corporation Counsel
Objective 2: Continue to advocate that the State remain committed to continuing revenue sharing payments to counties.	
100% of Ottawa legislative delegation reports understanding of the County's position on the issue and all vote to retain revenue sharing.	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 3: Identify and develop a plan for funding legacy costs.	
Commissioners consider a plan to address the future cost of the MERS Defined Benefit Retirement System.	Commissioners, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
A plan is presented to Commissioners that addresses the County health plan expense.	Commissioners, Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Objective 4: Implement and continue processes to ensure appropriate staffing levels and pay.	
100% of wage study work is completed.	Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Processes are in place to regularly review classifications and every position as it becomes vacant.	Administrator, Human Resources, Fiscal Services
Objective 5: Maintain or improve bond ratings.	
100% of ratings from Fitch, Standard and Poor's, and Moody's are maintained or improved.	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 6: Identify and develop strategies to address potential financial threats.	
Commissioners approve a strategy to address financial threats that clearly identifies threats and solutions.	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Financing tools are fully funded.	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
The operational budget deficit is eliminated.	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
All legislation that would impact County finances is identified and supported or opposed as appropriate.	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning
Commissioners consider a study to change fiscal years.	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Goal 2: To maintain and enhance communication with citizens, employees, & other stakeholders.	
Objective 1: Develop and implement a comprehensive legislative action plan to communicate with legislators	
100% of Ottawa legislative delegation report understanding of the County's positions on various issues within the Legislative Plan.	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning
100% of Commissioners positively evaluate the lobbyist contract.	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning
Objective 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan to communicate with the public	
25% of citizens report using miOttawa.org to communicate with or learn about Ottawa County government.	Administrator, Information Technology
40% of citizens report good awareness of County activities.	Commissioners, Administrator
25% of citizens report knowledge of revenue sharing and potential impacts of its loss.	Commissioners, Administrator
Commissioners approve a comprehensive communications plan.	Commissioners, Administrator
Objective 3: Continue to develop and implement methods of communicating with employee groups.	
Percentage of employees reporting satisfaction with County Administration increases by 5% on Employee Satisfaction Survey.	Administrator, Administration Departments
Objective 4: Continue to improve communication with Commissioners.	
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction with communication from Administration.	Administrator, Administration Departments
Commissioners consider a cost-benefit analysis of paperless agendas.	Commissioners, Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 5: Identify and appoint the best applicants to boards and commissions.	
100% of applicants are interviewed prior to appointment.	Commissioners, Administrator, HR
100% of board & commission seats are filled.	Commissioners, Administrator, HR
Objective 6: Strengthen role in state, regional and national professional organizations.	
Ottawa County, the Board of Commissioners, and staff are recognized as leaders and hold leadership positions in professional organizations.	Commissioners, 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.	12/31/09	Commissioners, Administrator, Planning
100% of Commissioners report progress in public understanding of respective roles of the road commission and County.	12/31/09	Administrator, Planning
Objective 2: Identify and develop strategies to address potential new initiatives.		
A comprehensive sustainability plan is presented to the Commission.	4/1/10	Administrator
Commissioners review and discuss potential diversity initiatives.	10/1/09	Administrator
Objective 3: Investigate opportunities to impact the negative consequences of development.		
Complete Purchase of Development Rights and Urban Smart Growth projects.	12/31/09	Planning
Complete one multi-jurisdictional access management ordinance.	12/31/09	Planning
Complete build-out analysis for two local government units.	12/31/09	Planning
Objective 4: Examine environmental and water quality policies and develop a research-based water quality action plan.		
A plan of action with measurable results is developed from water quality research.	12/31/10	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
100% of attendees surveyed report the Water Quality Forum presented useful, relevant information.	11/30/09	Administrator, Parks, MSU Extension, Health
A county groundwater resources inventory is completed.	12/31/10	Planning
Objective 5: Provide quality County facilities throughout the county.		
Commissioners consider report on use of additional land for communication tower leasing.	12/31/09	Administrator, Planning, IT, Fiscal Services
Grand Haven project is completed on-time and within budget.	12/31/09	Administrator, Facilities, Fiscal Services
Objective 6: Consider opportunities to establish a countywide land use and economic development planning organization		
100% of Commissioners report satisfaction that options for a countywide land use organization have been fully evaluated.	9/30/09	Administrator, Planning
If the OCEDO approves the report recommendations, fully implement the plan for a reorganized economic development function.	12/31/09	Administrator, Planning
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.		
Commissioners consider the report regarding the potential combination of the offices of Clerk & Register of Deeds.	9/30/09	Administrator
Commissioners consider a report regarding the potential reorganization of Public Utilities.	9/30/09	Administrator, Planning, Corporation Counsel, Fiscal Services
Commissioners consider the Fiscal Services Organizational Study.	11/30/09	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services
Commissioners receive a thorough evaluation of the Drug Court pilot projects.	9/30/09	Planning
Commissioners receive a report from the Jail Mental Health Task Force.	12/31/09	Administrator, CMH, Planning, Sheriff
Commissioners consider a report regarding veterans services in the County.	11/30/09	Administrator
Objective 2: Evaluate substance abuse funding, service structure, and community needs.		
100% of Commissioners are satisfied that substance abuse services and funding are appropriately funded and evaluated.	12/31/09	Planning, Fiscal Services, Health, CMH, Corporation Counsel
Objective 3: 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.	8/31/09	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Service levels are identified for all mandated services and results are ranked by Commissioners.	8/31/09	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 4: Continue implementation of outcome-based performance measurement system.		
100% of County departments use outcome-based performance measurements to make management and service decisions.	Ongoing	Administrator, Fiscal Services
Objective 5: Establish better employee-management communications.		
100% of regularly-attending Labor-Management Cooperation Committee members report improved sense of communication between labor and management and report greater understanding of issues facing the County.	12/31/09	Administrator, LMCC
5% increase in employee satisfaction with "climate of trust".	12/31/09	Administrator, LMCC
A disease management plan is presented to the Commission.	11/30/09	Administrator, LMCC
Objective 6: Examine opportunities for offering services to local units of government.		
Commissioners consider report on benefit of County tax dollars.	10/1/09	Administrator, Planning, Fiscal Services
100% of County services that are cost-effective to offer are made available to local units of government.	Ongoing	Administrator, All Departments
Objective 7: 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 all paper and electronic records.	6/30/10	Administrator, All Departments
Objective 8: Complete labor negotiations with applicable employee groups.		
Remaining labor contracts are renewed by May 1, 2009.	5/1/09	Administrator, Human Resources