



# 2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

State of Michigan  
County of Ottawa

20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts  
January 2018





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## Strategic Planning Oversight Team

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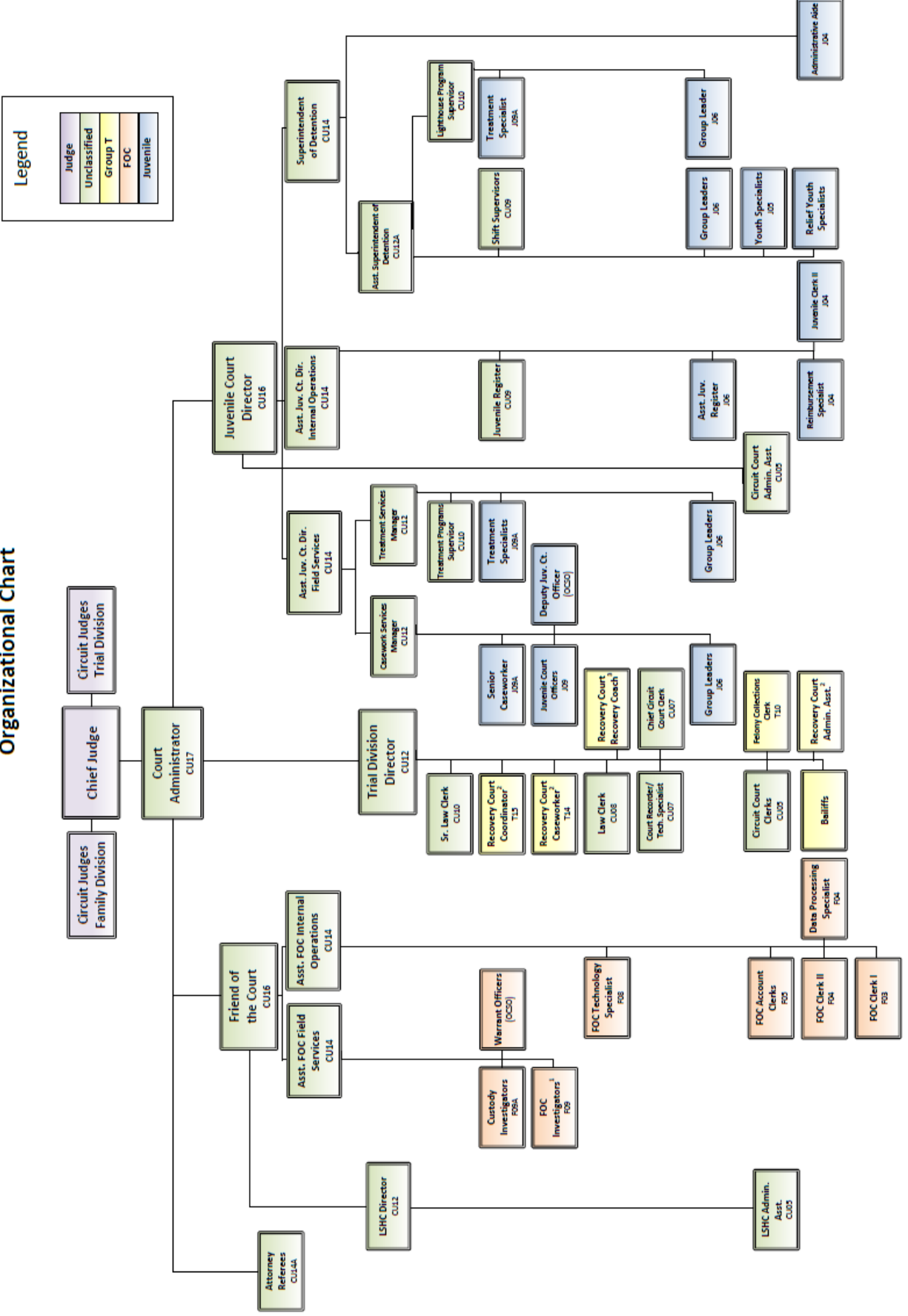
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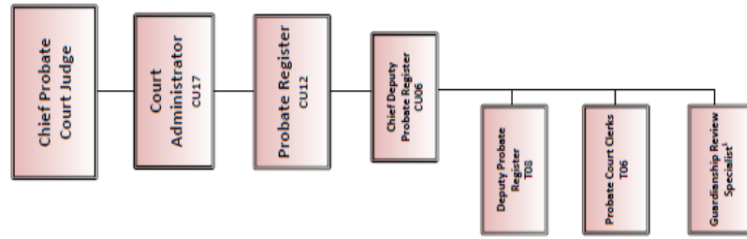
Ms. Kathy Winston  
Assistant Friend of the Court – Internal Operations

# 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Organizational Chart



<sup>1</sup> FOC Investigators include alpha-split case workers, medical investigator, bench warrant investigators, establishment investigators, interstate investigator and coordination conference investigator.  
<sup>2</sup> Grant funded position.  
<sup>3</sup> Services provided under contract.

## Probate Court Organizational Chart



\* Services provided under contract

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# 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

January 2018

## Section 1: The Purposes of Courts

Many years ago, groups of judges and court administrators gathered at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada to discuss the purposes of courts. Over a multi-year period, a clear understanding emerged regarding why courts exist in our communities and what specific functions courts should perform in support of our constitutional democracy.

The following list of the eight purposes of courts is certainly not all-inclusive, however, it does provide a strategic direction to judges and court employees entrusted with the important work of the judicial branch of government.

*Purposes of Courts* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saHb06PNadQ>)

1. *Do individual justice in individual cases*
2. *Appear to do justice in individual cases*
3. *Provide a final resolution of legal disputes*
4. *Protect individuals from the arbitrary use of government power*
5. *Make a formal record of legal status*
6. *Deter criminal behavior*
7. *Rehabilitate persons convicted of crimes*
8. *Separate persons convicted of crimes from society*

Similar discussions about the purposes of courts have occurred in numerous courts nationwide, resulting in the same conclusions. More recently, organizational management research has further established that strategic direction alone is not sufficient for a court to be a high-performance organization. In addition to a clear strategic direction, courts must be well versed in strategic execution to meet or exceed established performance measures. Stated another way, courts that execute well do four things very consistently. First, judges and court employees know the goals of the organization; second, they know what to do to achieve the goals; third, they keep score; and fourth, they are held accountable (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94w1Tt5lpS4>).

To become a high performing court, the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts developed their first, court-wide Strategic Plan in 2004 under the direction of the court leadership team and with the guidance of Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc. During the past fourteen years, the courts' judicial and administrative leadership, strategic planning oversight and action teams, and court staff implemented the Strategic Plan achieving many great accomplishments such as assisting with the design and transition into a new court facility in Grand Haven, opening the Legal Self Help Center, securing grants to support recovery courts and other innovations, improving the court intern program, implementing the *Building Bench Strength* (talent development/talent management) program, providing training to staff, hosting annual bench/bar meetings, and meeting or exceeding court performance measures promulgated by the State Court Administrative Office, to name a few. Additional accomplishments between 2004 and 2017 are provided in Appendix A.

To continue the courts' efforts to improve its strategic execution, they engaged with the National Center for State Courts in 2013 to study and implement the High Performance Court Framework (HPCF -

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<http://www.ncsc.org/information-and-resources/high-performance-courts.aspx>). The HPCF identifies a quality cycle courts can employ to ensure management issues are properly identified, quality data is consistently collected and analyzed in an appropriate fashion, and corrective action plans are modeled to achieve results in a timely fashion. This HPCF effectively adopts the strategic execution model used in the private sector and applies it to the public sector in a manner that supports the judicial branch.

After the first ten years of operating with the guidance of a comprehensive strategic plan, in 2014 the courts embarked on a planning process to overhaul the existing Strategic Plan. The process, which was again facilitated by PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., included:

- (1) surveying key partners and stakeholders as well as judicial officers and staff;
- (2) discussing an ideal future for the courts;
- (3) reviewing and analyzing external and internal trends;
- (4) identifying future opportunities and threats;
- (5) updating the courts' strategic focus areas, goals, and objectives; and
- (6) identifying annual strategic/priority projects.

This detailed trend analysis is available in the 2015-2017 Strategic Plan and the process will likely be completed again in the next iteration of the courts' strategic plan. More recently, the Strategic Planning Oversight Team (SPOT) reviewed the current strategic plan and approved a series of updates to guide our court operations through 2020.

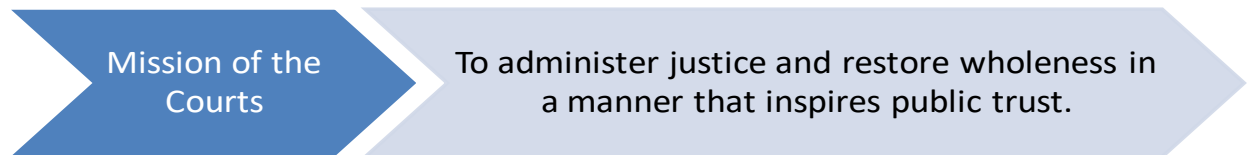
Since knowing the goals of the courts' is the first step in effective strategic execution, this Plan turns next to the mission, vision, and core values for the 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts. These statements emerged from extensive discussion among judges and court staff and during the past fourteen years have become an institutionalized part of the courts' operations.



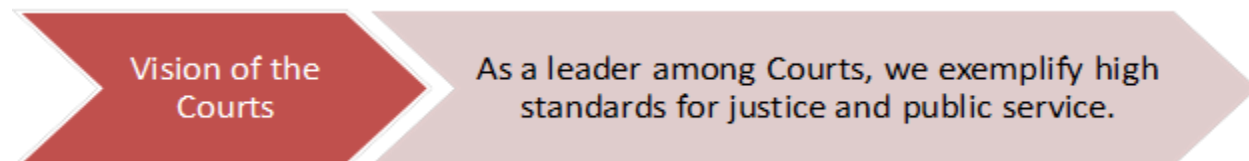
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## Section 2: Mission, Vision and Core Values

An organization's mission statement conveys why it exists – its primary purpose. A vision of the future communicates what the courts will look like or will be doing when performing at their best. The core values convey the attitudes and behaviors embraced by the courts; they should guide decision-making and the day-to-day actions of all court employees, interns and volunteers.



This mission statement intentionally embodies several of the purposes of courts, as enumerated in Section 1. The competent administration of justice necessarily includes doing individual justice in individual cases, appearing to do justice, and providing a final resolution of legal disputes. In addition, the courts are dedicated to restoring wholeness to litigants through a variety of evidence-based programs including substance abuse treatment, family counseling, mentoring for youthful offenders, residential programming for girls, and much more. The courts also provide some relief to crime victims through the collection of court ordered restitution payments. Efforts to inspire public trust include the provision of high quality customer service, legal self-help options, and the responsible use of public resources to provide judicial services.

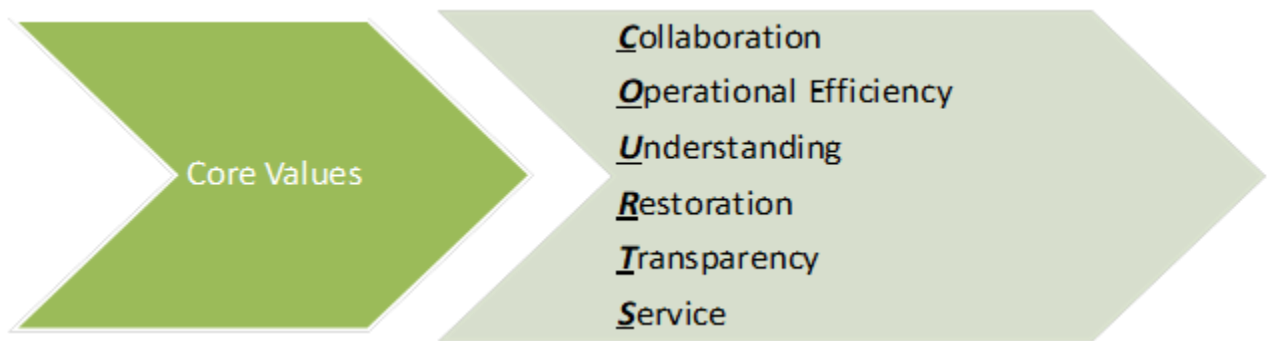


To obtain the above vision, the courts are committed to:

- provide justice and equal access to all;
- process and resolve legal matters quickly, fairly, and efficiently;
- be nimble and embrace change; respond quickly and effectively to emerging needs and circumstances;
- provide easy physical and electronic access to services at all court locations; use proven technologies to enhance access, services, and operational efficiencies;
- use evidence-based and promising practices to achieve effective case and justice outcomes;
- seek sufficient funding and resources to meet the needs of the community and court users;
- develop positive community relations and collaborate effectively with justice system and community partners; and
- be an “employer-of-choice” with a stellar reputation, attracting highly skilled applicants, and ensuring judicial officers and employees are well-trained, satisfied, and engaged.

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All the efforts discussed above have been identified by judges and court employees to demonstrate how the courts' high standards for justice and public service may be operationalized daily. Clear identification of the courts' mission and vision was a critical first step toward achieving effective strategic execution. It became evident early in the strategic planning process that knowing the goal and what to do to achieve the goal are certainly important, but the goals must be understood and implemented in the relational environment of the courts. As the third branch of government, courts are both independent and inter-dependent. While individual case decisions are made independently by judicial officers, the administrative operations of the courts require extensive collaboration among all three branches of government, as well as attorneys, litigants, treatment services providers, educators, and more. The development and maintenance of strong partnerships among all stakeholders is further served by the adoption of the courts' core values, as identified below.



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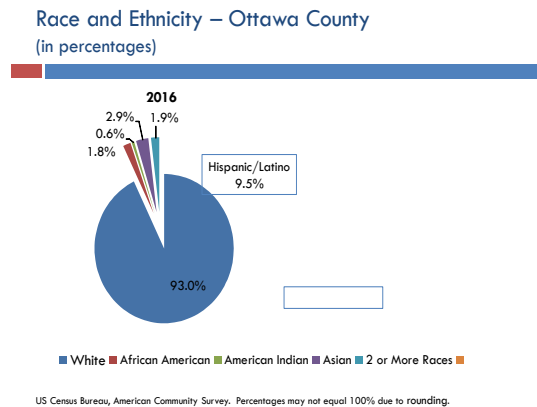
## Section 3: Trends Analysis, Implications, and Opportunities and Threats

There are many social/demographic, economic, policy/political, technological, and criminal justice system trends affecting the judicial branch nationally, as well as the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts. Below are a few of the most significant trends likely to impact the courts in the future. The projected implications of the trends on the courts also are summarized below. Finally, a few of the greatest opportunities and challenges/potential threats facing the courts are presented at the end of this section.

### Social and Demographic Trends<sup>1</sup>

1. **Population.** Ottawa County is one of the fastest growing counties in Michigan, according to the US Census Bureau. The population of Ottawa County increased 6.5 percent from 2010 to 2016. In 2016, the County's population was 282,250. Between 2010 and 2016, the population of the county's two largest cities (Holland and Grand Haven) increased 1.5 percent and 4.5 percent respectively. The State of Michigan's population increased slightly (approximately 0.5 percent) from 2010-2016.

2. **Race and Ethnicity.** While Ottawa County's population remains predominantly Caucasian (93 percent), it is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. In contrast, the Caucasian populations of the United States and the State of Michigan in 2016 were 77 percent and 80 percent, respectively. In 2016, 9.5 percent of Ottawa County's population was Hispanic/Latino. Additionally, the proportion of African Americans, American Indians, Asians, and 2 or more races living in the County in 2016 remained stable at 1.8%, 0.6%, 2.9%, and 1.9%, respectively.



3. **Age.** The population in Ottawa County is aging, yet it is younger than the population in the State of Michigan and the United States. In 2010, 11.8 percent of Ottawa County's population was 65 years or older; by 2016, it increased to 14 percent. The percent of population 65 years or older was higher for the State of Michigan and the United States in 2016 – 16.2 percent and 15.2 percent respectively. Interestingly, the number of persons under 18 years declined in Ottawa County, from 26.1% in 2010 to 24% in 2016. There was a slightly smaller decline during the same period in the State of Michigan and in the United States.
4. **Education.** Persons living in Ottawa County are more educated on average than persons living in the State of Michigan or the United States. Specifically, a larger proportion of persons 25 years and older have graduated from high school and have a bachelor's degrees in Ottawa County (91.7 percent and 31.6 percent respectively) compared with 89.9 percent and 27.4 percent respectively in the State of Michigan and 87 percent and 30.3 percent respectively in the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau and Annual American Community Survey.

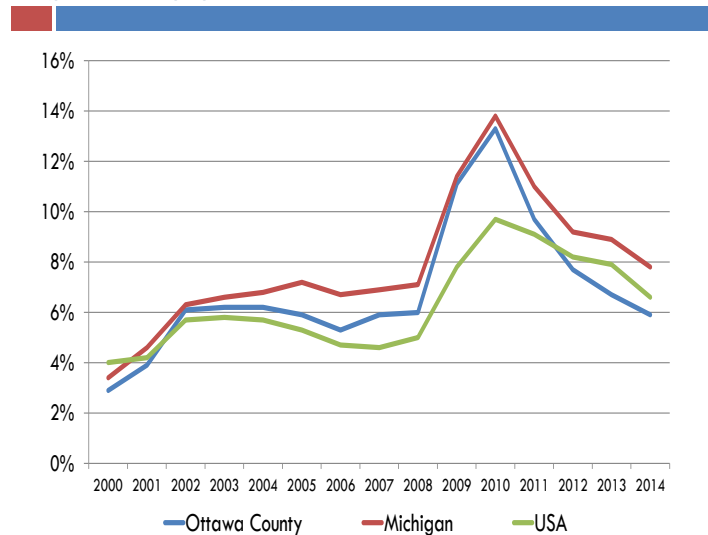
5. Additional Social Trends.

- Increasing use of social media and networking to maintain connections, communicate, and do business
- Increasing awareness of environmental issues and push for “going green”
- Increasing service demands (e.g., customers demand better and faster services; consumers are more informed)
- Changing work and lifestyle choices (e.g., working virtually; leisure time activities)
- Continued shifting and mobile population – out migration in Michigan

**Economic Trends<sup>2</sup>**

6. Unemployment. Ottawa County’s unemployment rate in 2000 was 2.9 percent (the unemployment rates for Michigan and the US in 2000 were 3.4 percent and 4.0 percent respectively). In 2010, Ottawa County’s unemployment rate peaked at 13.3 percent (Michigan’s rate peaked at 13.8 percent and the US’ rate peaked at 9.7 percent in 2010). Since 2010, unemployment rates have decreased significantly. In December 2013, the unemployment rates were: 5.9 percent in Ottawa County; 7.8 percent in Michigan; and 6.6 percent for the US. By 2016, the Ottawa County unemployment rate further dropped to 3.8%, while the State of Michigan and the US continued to be higher at 4.8% and 4.6%.

**Unemployment Rates– 2000 – 2014**  
(percent of population)



U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. \*Unemployment rates are as of January of each year, except for Michigan and Ottawa County 2014 rates, which are December 2013 estimates.

7. Median Household Income. Between 2012 and 2016, the median household income (in 2016 dollars) in Ottawa County was higher than the median household incomes for the State of Michigan and the United States. Specifically, between 2012 and 2016, median household income in Ottawa County has risen to \$61,367. Between 2012 and 2016, the median household income for the State of Michigan was \$50,803 (17.2% lower) and for the United States, it was \$55,322 (9.8% lower).

8. Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing. The median value of owner occupied housing in Ottawa County increased nearly 18 percent from 2012 to 2016 (from \$156,400 to \$160,500). During the same period, the median value of owner occupied housing in the State of Michigan decreased 0.6 percent (from \$128,600 to \$127,800); for the United States, it increased nearly 1.8 percent (from \$181,400 to \$184,700).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

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9. Median Gross Monthly Rent (plus utilities). In 2016, median gross monthly rent was lower in Ottawa County than in the United States, but slightly higher than in Michigan overall. From 2012 to 2016, median gross monthly rent increased 7.7 percent in Ottawa County (from \$749 to \$807). During the same time, median gross monthly rent increased 5.8 percent in the State of Michigan (from \$755 to \$799) and 6.7 percent in the United States (from \$889 to \$949).
  10. Persons Living in Poverty. Ottawa County has a lower proportion of persons living in poverty than Michigan and the United States, however the percentage is growing. In 2016, persons living in poverty were estimated at 9% of the Ottawa County population. The same proportion of persons living in poverty for the State of Michigan was 15 percent in 2016. For the United States, the percentage was 12.7 percent. Note: \$24,600 was the poverty threshold for a family of four in 2017, according to the US Poverty Guidelines.

### **Policy/Political Trends**

The external trends listed below represent national trends affecting courts across the United States. The sources for these trends are PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., the Center for Public Policy Studies, and the National Center for State Courts. The Strategic Planning Oversight Team believes the trends are relevant to the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts and will have implications for the Courts in the coming years.

11. Ongoing debate over social change and controversial issues (e.g., same sex marriage; legalization of marijuana; immigration reform; Health Care Reform/Affordable Care Act).
12. Declining state (and local) budgets and depleted reserves.
13. Continuing scrutiny on how public tax dollars are spent and pressure to contain costs.
14. Continuing polarization and gridlock among the major political parties.
15. Increasing focus on human trafficking.
16. Growing pressure to consolidate and/or regionalize services.
17. Increasing legislation impacting the business of the courts and creating unfunded mandates.
18. Reducing state funding for some court/juvenile services and programs; local courts are increasingly having to fund a greater proportion of these programs
19. Declining judicial discretion (e.g., legal issues, which typically are handled by the courts, are increasingly being legislated; laws are being passed that dictate how legal issues must be resolved).
20. Increasing government intervention in what were once thought to be personal lifestyle choices (e.g., smoking, obesity).
21. Growing tension between increasing expectations for government solutions (e.g., public expects the courts to solve many of society's problems) and the call for less government involvement in personal lives (e.g., smoking, diet, health care).
22. Declining levels of collaboration between local legislative and judicial branches.
23. Increasing church/state blending of philosophies and priorities.

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## Technological/Scientific Trends

24. Continuing wireless revolution and rapidly developing telecommunications/information technology – gadgets galore.
25. Inability or unwillingness to unplug, tune out, or turn off; always connected.
26. Increasing divide between “digital natives” (the youngest generation) and everyone else.
27. Continuing expectation/demand for 24/7 access and services (e.g., e-everything, easy access from anywhere anytime).
28. More distance learning (e.g., online courses, webinars, virtual meetings, videoconferencing).
29. Continuing need for and progress in networking and sharing of appropriate information (information exchange standards).
30. Increasing (threat of) cyber-attacks and identity theft.
31. Continued scientific breakthroughs (e.g., in areas such as brain research/science providing insights into implicit bias, human behavior, etc; nanotechnology; human genetics; and finding a cure and effective treatments for common diseases).

## Justice System Trends

32. Changing composition of court users (e.g., more non-English speaking and self-represented).
33. Increasing/changing caseloads and workloads (e.g., increase in some types of cases, increasing demand for greater customer service and assistance, more complex cases, more fee waiver requests, more inability to pay/defaults).
34. Declining budgets/funding at both the state and local levels.
35. Increasing number of litigants with mental health and/or addiction problems.
36. Increase in the use of alternative dispute resolutions (e.g., mediation, arbitration, ODR).
37. Increasing need/demand for the use of technology to enhance access and allow for doing business remotely/electronically (e.g., e-filing, online payments, video arraignments/hearings, access to case information, access to information via the internet/website).
38. Graying workforce, especially among administrators/managers.
39. Declining court infrastructure (facilities, technology, equipment, security).
40. The rise in physical threats and violence against judges and prosecutors.
41. Increasing collaboration among justice system partners to address system-wide issues.
42. Increasing use of evidence-based programs and practices to achieve more effective outcomes.
43. Increase in paperless systems/digital records.
44. Declining number of jury trials.
45. Continuing/growing distrust of the justice system generally (e.g., general distrust of government, belief it takes too long, costs too much, and African Americans cannot get a fair trial).

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## Internal Trends – 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts

The Strategic Planning Oversight Team reviewed internal trends related to the courts' caseload, workload, budget, and staffing levels. Comparative data is available at the Michigan Supreme Court Judiciary Dashboard (<http://courts.mi.gov/education/stats/dashboards/Pages/default.aspx>) so it is not repeated in detail for this Strategic Plan. To summarize, the 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts regularly meet or exceed the required performance measures promulgated by the State Court Administrative Office. These measures include public satisfaction, timeliness, recidivism related to problem-solving courts, child support rates, clearance rates, and collections standards compliance.

Caseloads remain relatively stable, with 4,750 new filings in the 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court in 2016 and 1,087 new filings in the Ottawa County Probate Court during the same period. Accountability through collections continue to be a priority, with the Trial Division producing more than \$1M in felony collections, the Friend of the Court collecting more than \$39M in child support, and the Juvenile Court producing revenue of more than \$1M through the provision of contractual services for juvenile offenders throughout the State of Michigan.

Court appointed attorney and related due process costs continue to represent a significant budgetary commitment for the courts in Ottawa County. Recent legislation creating the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission, however, may result in capping the local share of these expenses with the State of Michigan contributing funds to ensure Ottawa County is able to meet new representation standards. If state funding is approved, Ottawa County will likely create a new Public Defender Office which will significantly alter existing court appointed counsel practices and impact the workflow of the courts.

From a budgetary trend perspective, the courts are well supported by the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners and generally have access to necessary resources to carry out all legally mandated functions. Being a good steward of the taxpayer dollars is critical to the courts, which translates into making cost efficient decisions in daily operations.

The courts also creatively use available grant funds (e.g., Bureau of Justice Assistance, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) and actively leverage specialized state and federal revenue sources (e.g., Child Care Fund, Title IV-E, Office of Child Support Cooperative Reimbursement Program) to assist in program development that better serves the Ottawa County community.

Staffing trends are observed closely through the courts' *Building Bench Strength* program, which is used to help ensure the courts have "the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time." The courts also have a strategic focus area action team devoted to Employee Development and Innovative Work Culture, which helps ensure professional development opportunities are available and to periodically assess employee satisfaction. Satisfaction measures are compiled every two years with substantive recommendations being prepared for the courts leadership team to consider. These assessments are an important mechanism allowing court staff to identify trends that need to be addressed so the court may maintain optimal levels of performance and employee satisfaction. In 2017, one of the high ratings (86%) emphasized that employees "are proud to work with the courts." Demographically, the courts workforce continues to be 2/3 female and 1/3 male, and well educated with nearly 50% having achieved a bachelor degree and 25% having achieved a post-graduate degree. Employee longevity with the courts is a major benefit in terms of highly experienced staff, able to provide excellent customer service – with nearly 50% having served more than 10 years. The unfortunate downside to this experiential trend is that nearly 25% of court staff are at or approaching retirement age.

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## Implications

The large variety of trends identified above will interact simultaneously in a myriad of ways. Following an analysis of these trends and a discussion with the Strategic Planning Oversight Team, the most significant implications of the many trends on the courts in the future are presented below.

### 1. Increasing Expectations and Service Needs of Court Users and the Public

- Court users and partners have high expectations for easy and convenient access, timely services, and timely resolution of cases.
- Public/users expect 24x7 access and services – the ability to do business with the courts electronically and over the Internet (e.g., Website).
- There is a growing need for language assistance and interpreters to serve Ottawa County’s increasingly diverse population.
- There is a growing need to provide services to self-represented litigants.
- The public expects courts to fix societal problems (e.g., dealing with mentally ill and addictions) and keep the community safe.
- The public expects greater accountability and transparency.
- The public expects the courts to perform highly/better. This includes: helping to reduce recidivism, increasing compliance with court orders, treating court users fairly and equally (i.e., applying procedural fairness practices), using evidence-based practices and treatment services, etc.
- Increasingly court users want to use alternative dispute resolution methods (including online dispute resolution/ODR) and other effective and innovative programs to enhance service

### 2. Increasing the Use of Technology and Increasing Operational Efficiency

- Technological improvements and enhancements are needed to keep pace with emerging and changing technologies.
- Efficiencies can be gained by using existing and emerging technologies.
- Operations (procedures and practices) need to be streamlined and simplified.
- It is critical court staff understand the value of consistent, quality data entry for analysis to improve efficiency
- Data sharing presents many opportunities – less redundancy, fewer errors, more informed decisions; privacy must be protected.
- The courts’ needs to have greater internal capacity to better use technology and increase operational efficiency. This includes having IT expertise readily accessible and responsive, better training of staff, etc.

### 3. Shifting Caseloads and Workloads

- The composition of the courts’ cases and workloads is shifting as noted in the Trends section above. For example, while some case type filings are declining, the courts are providing more comprehensive and different services to court users such as self-help services, intensive supervision, and evidence-based treatment and programs to meet the complex individual needs of court users.
- Additionally, the complexity of cases is increasing. Cases include multiple legal issues, challenging mental health and substance abuse issues, dually-diagnosed youth, etc.
- The courts must be able to respond and adapt as needed to meet the changing



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circumstances; the courts must be able to change more quickly in the future to respond effectively to fluctuations.

4. Increasing and/or Maintaining Adequacy and Use of Resources.

- Courts need sufficient, predictable, and sustainable resources to fulfill their mission and achieve their vision of the future.
- Courts/County needs to invest in, and appropriately fund, effective programs and services (e.g., evidence-based treatment and services, specialty courts, etc.).
- Courts must use existing resources (e.g., fiscal, staff, facilities, technology, space, programs, etc.) effectively and efficiently. This requires critically assessing how resources are used and reallocating and/or realigning based on needs and strategic priorities. This further requires effective collaboration with a variety of external stakeholders.
- Unfunded mandates strain resources.

5. Changing Composition and Skills of the Workforce

- For the first time in history, five generations make-up the workforce today (previously 3 generations were working side by side); different generations have different expectations and needs.
- The courts' workforce is aging; a large proportion is eligible to retire now and in the next few years.
- Institutional knowledge will be lost if it is not transferred to the next generation of leaders.
- New opportunities will be present for younger workers and for new hires when turnover/attrition occurs.
- The skills needed to be successful in today's environment are often different than the skills needed in years past.
- Training and re-training are needed to increase the competency levels of judges and staff.

6. Embracing Change and Increasing the Courts' Abilities to be Nimble, Proactive, and Responsive

- The pace of change is unrelenting; it is unlikely to slow down soon.
- The courts need to be nimble; they must be able to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and needs.
- The courts must be able to react to and implement legislative and Supreme Court mandates as well as be more proactive and responsive in the future.
- The status quo will not suffice; the courts must embrace continuous improvement (foster a culture that is eager to change and improve). For example, they must:
  - be able to keep up with changing and emerging technologies;
  - be able to respond to changing case and workload demands, and service needs of court users (declining caseloads, increasing case complexity, increasingly diverse population/court users);
  - look for new and more effective ways of doing business in the future;
  - form new partnerships and collaborate with partners differently in the future;
  - and critically review and challenge internal operations and service delivery assumptions to respond effectively to changing times.

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### Summary of Greatest Opportunities and Threats Facing the Courts

<b>Opportunities</b> (things that may assist the Court in fulfilling its mission and achieving its vision)	<b>Challenges/Potential Threats</b> (things that may impede the Court's ability to fulfill its mission and achieve its vision)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form new partnerships and use emerging technologies; leverage technological innovations</li> <li>2. Increase efficiency</li> <li>3. Pursue grant/innovative funding</li> <li>4. Enhance training and development/cross training; strengthen skills of judges and staff</li> <li>5. Retirements and turnover will result in new staff with fresh/different ideas; will provide existing staff with promotional opportunities</li> <li>6. Leverage collaborative relations (local, regional, state, and national levels)</li> <li>7. Improve access to, and sharing of, information</li> <li>8. Use positive messaging; share the good news - activities and accomplishments</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of fiscal resources/adequate funding</li> <li>2. Inertia; unwillingness to change; bound to tradition; lack of buy-in for new direction</li> <li>3. Inflexibility; unwillingness to try new/different things</li> <li>4. Limitations of current court structure</li> <li>5. Inadequate pay/incentives</li> <li>6. Loss of human interaction/connections</li> <li>7. Safety and security (e.g., violence, cyber-threats)</li> <li>8. Fast pace of change vs. slow pace of justice</li> <li>9. Unwillingness/inability to share appropriate data/information; lack of uniformity</li> <li>10. Failure to build trusting relationships with outside entities (appropriate data sharing, communication, collaborative programming)</li> </ol>

## Section 4: Strategic Planning Survey Results

The following survey results are summarized from the 2014 Strategic Planning Survey. The survey was not repeated during this strategic planning cycle because most findings continue to be valid. It is anticipated a new survey will be conducted in 2019 for the next iteration of the Strategic Plan.

### Overview - 2014 Strategic Planning Survey

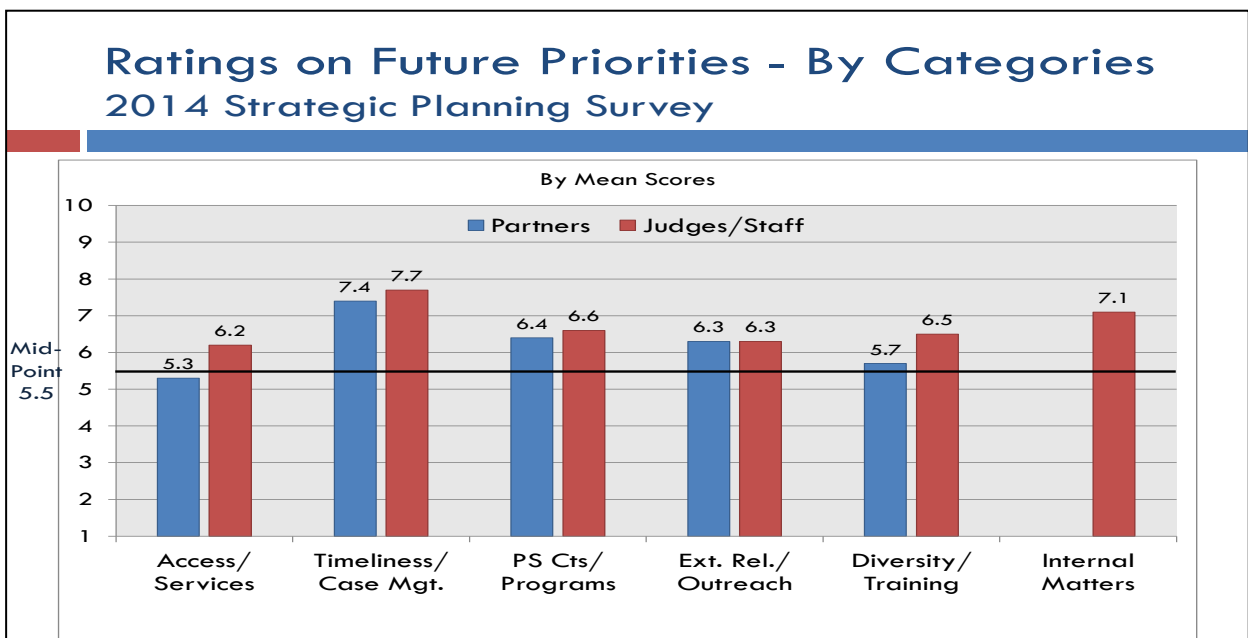
In February and March 2014, a sample of partners and stakeholders, and all judges and staff were surveyed to gather opinions and suggestions for use in updating the court's Strategic Plan. The response rates to this survey were very high; 69 percent of external partners responded (n=56) and 50 percent of judicial officers and staff responded (n=73). A summary of the results follows.

### Key Findings

#### Future Court Priorities

Survey respondents were asked to rate the level of priority of a variety of important items. The items were grouped into 6 categories: (1) Access/Services; (2) Timeliness/Case Management; (3) Problem Solving Courts/Court Programs; (4) External Relations/Community Outreach; (5) Diversity/Training; and (6) Internal Court Matters. The results of the category ratings are as follows.

1. Partners rated the "Timeliness/Case Management Practices" category of questions as the highest, future court priority. The "Problem solving Courts/Court Programs" category of questions was rated second highest.
2. Judges and staff also rated the "Timeliness/Case Management" category the highest, future court priority. They rated the "Internal Matters" category (e.g., communication, teamwork, management practices, work space) second highest.



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The highest rated future priorities *within each of the 6 categories* of questions are as follows.

3. Access/Services

- The highest rated questions in this category for both Partners and Judges/Staff were “provide timely services to court users” and “increase remote access/ability to do business with the courts electronically.”

4. Timeliness/Case Management Practices

- Both Partners and Judges/Staff rated “start hearings/trials on time – when they are scheduled to begin” and “resolve matters/cases in a timely manner” as highest, future priorities.

5. Problem Solving Courts/Court Programs

- Partners rated “reduce recidivism through court programs” and “enhance/add services for juveniles” as highest priorities.
- Judges/Staff rated “enhance/add services for families” and “reduce recidivism through court programs” as highest priorities.

6. External Relations/Community Outreach

- The highest rated questions in this category for both Partners and Judges/Staff were “share appropriate data/information among justice partners” and “improve communication/dialogue with partners and stakeholders.”

7. Diversity/Training

- The highest rated question in this category for both Partners and Judges/Staff was “increase training/development of court staff.”

8. Internal Court Matters (Judges/Staff Only)

- The highest rated questions in this category were “strengthen supervision and management practices” and “improve internal communication and teamwork.”

The **highest overall priorities, across all questions**, are as follows.

9. The five highest rated, future priorities for Partners and Judges/staff are shown in the following table.

<b>Highest Rated Future Priorities – by Individual Question</b>	<b>Partners/ Stakeholders (n=56)</b> (in rank order with 1 being the highest)	<b>Judges/ Staff (n=73)</b> (in rank order with 1 being the highest)
Start hearings and trials at the time they are scheduled to begin.	1	1
Resolve legal matters/cases in a timely manner.	2	2
Share appropriate data/information among justice system partners.	3	
Increase ability to do business with the courts remotely or electronically.	4	
Provide timely services to court customers.	5	4
Strengthen supervision and management practices.		3
Improve internal communication and teamwork.		5

#### Most Desired Changes in the Next 1-2 Years

10. The most frequently mentioned desired changes of survey respondents are shown in the table below.

<b>Most Desired Changes in the Next 1-2 Years</b>	
<b>Partners/Stakeholders</b> (in order of most frequently mentioned)	<b>Judges/Staff</b> (in order of most frequently mentioned)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve/expand programs and services</li> <li>2. Improve technology, computer systems, and equipment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve/expand programs and services</li> <li>2. Improve technology, computer systems, and equipment</li> <li>3. Make improvements for staff</li> </ol>

Examples of specific suggestions made by survey respondents in each of these areas are as follows.

#### Improve/Expand Programs and Services

- Suggestions from Partners included: provide more programs for juveniles; fully fund and staff drug court; increase use of diversion programs for criminal defendants; offer facilitative mediation as an ADR method; increase ADR mechanisms; provide more innovative treatment opportunities for juvenile offenders; enhance community service opportunities; use YLS (Youth Level of Service assessments) to drive programming and decision making for juveniles; add a mental health court and treatment; more and better equipped LGALs (legal guardian *ad litem*); and greater focus on re-entry partnerships.
- Suggestions from Judges/Staff included: place a higher emphasis on mental health services; increase work with juveniles' families and focus on reentry; fund Adult Drug Treatment Court; improve services to juveniles and families; increase interpreter/language assistance.

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### Improve Technology, Computer Systems, and Equipment

- Suggestions from Partners included: Increase remote access and ability to attend court remotely (video); increase paperless court including pre-trial/trials; provide electronic access to dispositions; expand/mandate e-filing; enhance public's ability to access via the Internet, especially at Fillmore location; and eliminate use/over use of fax machines.
- Suggestions from Judges/Staff included: Improve equipment; improve computer system; increase use of available technology – text alerts, less mail; improve website; replace BIS system (audio/video system to capture official court record); use one integrated computer system for the entire court; and expand digital records.

### Make Improvements for Staff

- Suggestions from Judges/Staff included: allow part-time; increase fairness related to flex schedules; work remotely; team building between departments; invest in talent development/strengthen BBS (Build Bench Strength program); and increase training for staff.

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## Section 5: Strategic Focus Areas, Goals, and Objectives

Below are the strategic focus areas, long-range goals, and objectives of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts. Together they present important areas the Courts will focus on in the years ahead as well as strategies for making continued improvements.

Strategic focus areas are large, encompassing issues that are fundamentally important to the Courts in the short and long-term. They are internal or external issues that are critically important to the Courts' overall success; they affect the Courts' ability to fulfill their purpose and work toward their vision of the future.

Goals are broad statements that define desired, end targets. They are ultimately what the Court is trying to achieve – the end results.

Strategies/Objectives are general statements that describe the manner in which the end result – or goal – will be achieved.

Strategic initiatives are specific, short-term (12 months or less) priority projects. They are specific priority projects derived from the objectives and will help the Courts achieve the long-range goals. These priority projects are reviewed and revised annually by the Strategic Planning Oversight Team.

### Strategic Focus Areas

(Revised 2018)

1. Resources and Technology
2. Access, Services, and Programs
3. Court Infrastructure and Security
4. Community Relations and Collaboration with Partners
5. Employee Development and Innovative Work Culture

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## Strategic Focus Area 1: Resources and Technology

Description: The courts must have sufficient and predictable funding (and other resources) to provide the highest quality of services to the people of Ottawa County. Solid technology infrastructure that supports the business of the courts is critical to fulfill the courts' mission and vision of the future. Adequate funding, enhanced technology, sufficient resources in all court locations, and the right number of well-trained staff are essential for the Courts to maintain high performance.

The courts currently have sufficient funding to accomplish the identified goals. Further, significant infrastructure improvements have been made to support the work of the courts. For example, technological enhancements have been, and continue to be, a priority. However, multiple case management systems, lack of easy access to real time data, inconsistent data, inability to purchase and invest in leading technology, etc., are hampering performance. Finally, the courts' staffing complement is not fully meeting current needs. Specifically, the courts need staff with new, different, and specialized skills (e.g., IT, public relations, data analysis, systems evaluation, research and development, training, accounting, grant writing) to perform at our highest levels.

Public resources are scarce. The courts' administration and judges remain committed to using public resources responsibly and effectively. As in the past, grants to supplement county, state and federal funding will be pursued where appropriate. Doing so will provide seed money for making improvements and/or to pilot innovative programs and services. Collaboration with county, state and federal funders to ensure the courts have the funding/resources needed to provide justice and quality services.

### Long-Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The courts will have sufficient, predictable, and stable funding and other requisite resources including human and technology resources to provide justice and quality services.

Obj. 1: Increase staff understanding of and advocate for the funding, staffing, and other resource needs of the courts.

Obj. 2: Monitor state legislative and local policy changes that potentially impact the funding and other resource needs of the courts and update court administration.

Obj. 3: Identify and share with court administration additional resources/grants to supplement the courts' funding.

Obj. 4: Identify and recommend cost savings and cost reduction measures where possible.

Goal 2: The courts' staffing patterns and technology infrastructure will support the business and priorities of the courts.

Obj. 1: Evaluate the courts' staffing patterns and assess the adequacy of the number and requisite skills of staff to provide quality justice and achieve the priorities of the Courts.

Obj. 2: Assess the courts' technology to make certain it meets the current and future needs of court users, judges, and staff.



Obj. 3: Assess the collection, measurement, adequacy, and quality level of data to inform operational and strategic decisions.

<b>Strategic Focus Area #1: Resources and Technology</b>			
<b>Priority Project</b>	<b>Lead Person(s)</b>	<b>Timeline (Start/End Dates)</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
1. Conduct a survey of the courts to determine the sufficiency and adequacy of court staffing			
2. Survey management staff and analyze responses to identify where technology is sufficient and where gaps exist			
3. Conduct an assessment of court collections methods; areas of data measurement and methods; and evaluate the quality of current data being used. Recommend improvements needed to court administration			

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## **Strategic Focus Area 2: Access, Services, and Programs**

Description: The courts are committed to providing the highest quality of justice and court services to all the people of Ottawa County. This will be done through enhancing access, improving and expanding services, and strengthening court programs in the years ahead. Continual research of and implementation of innovative practices and programs is a high priority to meet the needs of court users and changing circumstances.

Ensuring access to all people regardless of race, ethnicity, language usage, age, income, and other factors is critical to the courts. Other priorities are making the courts more user-friendly, easily understood, and accessible (both physically and electronically) while providing timely and helpful services to court users.

Another high priority continues to be procedural fairness for all court users. Procedural fairness is defined as court users feeling that decisions are made through fair court processes. According to national research, procedural fairness includes: (1) handling cases effectively and fairly and (2) treating court users with dignity and respect throughout the court process.<sup>3</sup> We will continue to evaluate and improve how cases are handled and ensure court users have a voice, are treated respectfully, understand the rationale for judges' decisions, and understand what they need to do to comply with the Court order, all of which are important elements of procedural fairness.

Additionally, the courts will enhance existing and implement new, innovative programs to meet the needs of court users, families, and youth. We will focus on achieving better case outcomes (such as reducing recidivism and increasing compliance with court orders) by using evidence-based and/or promising programs and practices, emerging research, and other proven practices.

Finally, we will establish, measure, and report on the courts' performance on key measures demonstrating transparency, accountability, and our commitment to continuous improvement.

### Long-Range Goals and Objectives:

#### Goal 1: The courts will be accessible to all people.

Obj. 1: Enhance language assistance to court users.

Obj. 2: Improve electronic access to the court and appropriate case information.

Obj. 3: Expand opportunities for court users to conduct court business from remote locations.

Obj. 4: Evaluate perceived barriers to accessing the courts, e.g., transportation, language, cost, hours of operation, lack of legal representation, etc.

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<sup>3</sup> Procedural fairness includes for dimensions: (1) Respect; (2) Voice; (3) Neutrality; and (4) Trust. Perceptions of procedural fairness are the strongest predictor of public satisfaction, approval, and confidence in the courts irrespective of why people are at court, whether they won or lost their case, and their ethnicity, race, and economic or social status, according to a growing body of national research. Thus, increased perceptions of procedural fairness can lead to greater public support for the courts. In addition, people who perceive that court processes are fair and they have received quality treatment are more likely to see the court's authority as legitimate, and in turn are more likely to comply with court orders. Sources: Dr. Tom Tyler, NYU, and Dr. David Rottman, National Center for State Courts.

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Goal 2: All court users and court personnel will be treated with dignity and respect. Judicial officers and staff will provide the highest quality of customer service – timely, respectful, and free of bias – to all court users.

Obj. 1: Establish, communicate, and reinforce an atmosphere of culturally competent service excellence which includes, but is not limited to:

- Treat everyone respectfully (e.g., jurors, victims, witnesses, attorneys, staff, the public)
- Provide timely services to court users; reduce wait times where possible
- Ensure court users understand what is ordered and what they need to do to comply
- Provide litigants a reasonable opportunity to express their needs and/or tell their side of the story
- Utilize and offer restorative practices

Obj. 2: Increase cross-departmental communication, collaboration, and mechanisms for responding to customer needs and questions.

Obj. 3: Train staff on implicit bias; identify areas where such bias may impact the administration of justice; monitor public concerns of bias; and evaluate the frequency of perceived implicit bias.

Goal 3: The courts' programs and services will meet the current and emerging needs of court users and the community, and improve justice-related outcomes.

Obj. 1: Evaluate and enhance, as needed, existing court programs and services for jurors, families, juveniles, and litigants with mental illness and addictions.

Obj. 2: Assess the use of evidence-based, innovative, and other effective court programs.

Obj. 3: Define success, measure effectiveness toward improved outcomes, and continuously improve programs, services, and outcomes.

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<b>Strategic Focus Area #2: Access, Services, and Programs</b>			
<b>Priority Project</b>	<b>Lead Person(s)</b>	<b>Timeline (Start/End Dates)</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
1. Review and improve language assistance options for court users, seeking assistance from SCAO			
2. Develop and implement juror satisfaction survey			
3. Assess the need for bi-lingual forms and services			
4. Review efforts of County cultural competency committee (4 C's program); make recommendations to court administration			

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### **Strategic Focus Area 3: Court Infrastructure and Security**

**Description:** In Michigan, circuit and probate court facilities are the financial responsibility of county government pursuant to MCL 45.16, MCL 46.7. The Michigan Supreme Court, through Administrative Order 1983-2, endorsed the use of design guidelines from a 1981 Michigan Courthouse Study for all future construction, remodeling, or renovation of court facilities in the state. Since the development of the first guidelines, there have been many advances in design and technology, and court facility standards were published in December of 2000 to incorporate advancements in building technologies and address the impact of changes in information technology that affect efficient trial court operations. Due to the county being the owner of court facilities, however, the design process is controlled locally, without court approval of final design documents, budgets, or schedules. Consequently, the courts' participation and input into the design, building, and maintenance of the various court facilities is based on the excellent collaborative relationship which has developed over time with County Administration and Board of Commissioners. Likewise, the courts' work closely with the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department on matters related to courthouse security.

#### Long-Range Goals and Objectives:

##### Goal 1: The courts' infrastructure will support the business and priorities of the courts.

Obj. 1: Annually assess the courts' facilities to determine whether they meet the needs of court users, judges, staff and the public.

Obj. 2: Assist the efforts of the Court Leadership Team, by request, as they collaborate with County Administration and Board of Commissioners to design and build a new Family Justice Center at the Fillmore Campus.

Obj. 3: Evaluate and make appropriate recommendations to improve physical access to all court buildings/facilities, ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Obj. 4: Identify ways to make the courthouse facilities more "family-friendly" and make recommendations to the Leadership Team.

##### Goal 2: The general public and court employees will have safe and secure facilities in which to conduct court business.

Obj. 1: Monitor and recommend strategies to strengthen safety and security at court locations and offices.

Obj. 2: Review existing, new, and emerging technologies to improve safety and security; make recommendations to the Leadership Team.

Obj. 3: Support Courthouse Security Committee efforts to inform and train judicial officers and staff on new processes, procedures, policies, and practices related to safety and security.

<b>Strategic Focus Area #3: Court Infrastructure and Security</b>			
<b>Priority Project</b>	<b>Lead Person(s)</b>	<b>Timeline (Start/End Dates)</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
1. Review and update key card access lists; submit recommendations to Leadership Team to secure court locations			
2. Review available safety technologies that may improve courthouse security; submit recommendations to Leadership Team			
3. Review and update security related policies; recommend updates to Leadership Team			
4. Research “family friendly” courthouses in other jurisdictions; recommend local improvements to Leadership Team			
5. Prepare an assessment tool for use in reviewing courthouse accessibility and ability to meet user needs			

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## **Strategic Focus Area 4: Community Relations and Collaboration with Partners**

Description: The courts are a separate and independent branch of government. However, they are part of a complex system that depends on and is affected by state and local executive and legislative branches of government. Additionally, the courts depend on and work closely with legal, community, and justice system partners to provide needed services, help reduce recidivism, increase public education about the courts, and keep communities safe.

Thus, positive community and intergovernmental relations at the state and local levels are essential. The courts will continue to enhance community relations by strengthening collaboration with partners and stakeholders, educating the public and students about the courts, communicating more effectively with state and local partners and stakeholders, and forming new partnerships as appropriate.

Focusing on this important area will enhance perceptions of the courts within the community and help build public trust and confidence in the courts. The public will better understand and be more informed about the work of the courts, our role in society, and overall court performance. Improved relations with partners and stakeholders also will benefit the courts. Collaborative relations will ultimately help the courts enhance our services to court users and the community.

### Long-Range Goals and Objectives:

#### Goal 1: The courts will seek to educate the public about the judicial branch.

Obj. 1: Educate justice system partners and the public about the courts, court programs, and resource needs.

Obj. 2: Strengthen connections within the community.

Obj. 3: Assess educational needs from community partners, employers, schools, and other community leaders.

Obj. 4: Acknowledge volunteer service at the courts and provide volunteer opportunity information to the public.

#### Goal 2: The courts will have positive relations with justice system and community system partners.

Obj. 1: Inform and educate justice system stakeholders about the courts (e.g., needs, services, performance).

Obj. 2: Collaborate with other branches of government, justice system partners, and community partners on projects of mutual interest and benefit.

Obj. 3: Develop educational tools and use feedback and/or personal experiences from constituents to build support for the work of the courts.

Obj. 4: Increase transparency and accountability.

<b>Strategic Focus Area #4: Community Relations and Collaboration with Partners</b>			
<b>Priority Project</b>	<b>Lead Person(s)</b>	<b>Timeline (Start/End Dates)</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>
1. Using existing court presentations developed for the public, prepare an adaptable presentation about the courts which can be easily modified based on audience interest and the presentation time allotment			
2. Establish, coordinate, and host an annual Volunteer Appreciation Day to honor court volunteers			
3. Establish and implement strategies to educate the public about volunteer opportunities			
4. Develop educational materials/tools about the courts to facilitate the education of court users and the public			



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## **Strategic Focus Area 5: Employee Development and Innovative Work Culture**

Description: To excel in the future, the courts will foster a positive and innovative work culture. This includes embracing innovation, being change-ready, fostering an engaging and satisfying work environment as well as increasing the skills and competencies of personnel, all of which are high priorities in the years ahead.

The courts want to be an employer-of-choice: an employer that easily attracts highly talented and skilled applicants and where existing staff are engaged and satisfied. In addition to providing competitive pay, benefits, and perks, we are committed to fostering a work culture that is innovative, embraces change, rewards continuous improvement and collaboration, and provides meaningful and purposeful work.

Additionally, instituting a mentoring culture, strengthening training and development opportunities, bolstering career growth and development opportunities, and developing existing and future leaders and managers are high priorities. Investing in the training and development of personnel will ensure staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to excel in the future.

### Long-Range Goals and Objectives:

#### Goal 1: The work culture and environment will be positive, innovative, and engaging.

Obj. 1: Increase career development which supports an innovative and flexible work environment.

Obj. 2: Support staff in their understanding of organizational changes and improvements.

Obj. 3: Implement best practices to strengthen the work culture and environment.

Obj. 4: Acknowledge, support and encourage innovation, change implementations, and achievements of teams and staff.

Obj. 5: Encourage and support teamwork and communication throughout the courts.

Obj. 6: Support and strengthen the supervisory, management, and leadership skills of supervisors and managers.

#### Goal 2: The courts' workforce will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to do their jobs/work well today as well as in the future.

Obj. 1: Identify existing and future skills needed by the courts and establish a strategy for the courts to meet those needs; submit recommendations to the Leadership Team.

Obj. 2: Provide education and training opportunities with a focus on the skills needed in the future.

Obj. 3: Provide on-the-job (real time) learning and development opportunities.

Strategic Focus Area #5: Employee Relations and Innovative Work Culture			
Priority Project	Lead Person(s)	Timeline (Start/End Dates)	Desired Outcome
1. Conduct a workforce analysis, including an administrative survey, to project human resource capital needed currently and within five years			
2. Based on current and emerging trend data, assess workplace skills needed in the courts currently and within the next five years			
3. Develop a curriculum of on-the-job learning and development opportunities			
4. Monitor the <i>Building Bench Strength</i> program toward continuous improvement and expanded staff participation			

## Divisional Strategic Projects

Each of the strategic focus areas identified in Strategic Plan have court wide priority projects associated with them, which will be evaluated and implemented (if feasible) by one of the five related action teams. In addition to these court wide efforts, the Strategic Plan recognizes a variety of special projects which are better suited to be developed and implemented on a divisional level. For this reason, there are certain court events and projects included below, for which the Circuit/Probate Leadership Team has assigned responsibility on a divisional basis. Some of the projects are recurring events, while others are intended to be time limited. As divisional needs change, these strategic projects may be modified and expanded. General project oversight will be provided by divisional administrators and regular updates will be shared with the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee and the Circuit/Probate Court Leadership Team.

Divisional Strategic Projects Trial Division			
Priority Project	Lead Person(s)	Timeline (Start/End Dates)	Desired Outcome
1. Annual Bench/Bar Meeting	Trial Division Director	May – November 2018	Successful Bench/Bar meeting on November 1, 2018 at Grand Haven Community Center
2. Courtroom Technology Upgrades		January-March 2018	Completion of BIS audio/video upgrades to courtrooms, hearing rooms, and jury assembly room in Grand Haven courthouse
3. Continued progress on Justice Suite case management software development		January 2018 – September 2019	
4. Provide staff training on courtroom technology			

Divisional Strategic Projects Friend of the Court Division			
Priority Project	Lead Person(s)	Timeline (Start/End Dates)	Desired Outcome
1. Annual Law Day/Law Week Activities	FOC; LSHC Director	January – May 2015	Successful Law week activities beginning May 1, 2018 with student mock trial
2. Co-sponsor Katty Shack 5K Run/Walk in support of crime victims		January – April 2015	Successful fund-raising events on April 27 and 28, 2018

3. Explore and recommend options for transitioning paternity arraignments to administrative hearings			
4. Evaluate and recommend options for alternative work location (AWL) pilot project		Complete by December 2018	
5. Annual Domestic Law Summit		February – June 2018	Successful/well attended domestic law summit on June 4, 2018; jury assembly room

Divisional Strategic Projects Juvenile Court			
Priority Project	Lead Person(s)	Timeline (Start/End Dates)	Desired Outcome
1. Annual PACK (Professionals Advocating and Caring for Kids) Meeting			
2. Annual Adoption Day Celebration			
3. YLS (Youth Level of Screening) Risk/Needs Assessment Implementation and Evaluation			
4. Identification and Implementation of juvenile specific EBP (evidence based practices)			
5. Development of specialized training for juvenile attorneys			

Divisional Strategic Projects Probate Court			
Priority Project	Lead Person(s)	Timeline (Start/End Dates)	Desired Outcome
1. Courtroom technology upgrades			
2. Pilot test e-filing for Michigan Probate Courts			
3. Develop student intern opportunities			
4. Provide staff training on courtroom technology			

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## Appendix A: Summary of Accomplishments (2004-2017)

The Courts have accomplished many priority projects between 2004 – 2017 thanks to the dedication and hard work of the Strategic Action and Divisional Teams. Below is a partial list of accomplishments that are directly or indirectly related to the Courts' Strategic Plans since the inaugural Strategic Plan was released in 2004.

### 2004 – “Strategic Planning”

1. Completed first court-wide Strategic Plan
2. Expanded the ADR plan to include domestic relations and probate cases
3. Completed a Caseflow Management Plan
4. Introduced a court-wide publication, *The Court Communicator*
5. Implemented the juvenile Drug Treatment Court
6. Completed the MiCSES conversion

### 2005 – “The Advent of Drug Treatment Courts”

1. Implemented the adult-felony Drug Treatment Court
2. Introduced Interactive Video Technology (IVT) and Video Conferencing capabilities
3. Implemented a web-based case management system in Juvenile Services (Courtstream)
4. Created the Citizen's Advisory Council

### 2006 – “Ottawa County Courthouse Planning”

1. Conducted the first Court User Survey
2. Developed the Master Technology Plan
3. Expedited the custody process in FOC
4. Expanded fine/fee payment options for the public (Telephone and Internet; [www.miottawa.org](http://www.miottawa.org))
5. Completed initial planning efforts for the new Ottawa County Courthouse
6. Created the “You and The Courts” educational video

### 2007 – “Collaborative Partnerships”

1. Expanded bed rental contracts in the Juvenile Detention Center
2. Launched the student intern program
3. Implemented the Guardianship Training Program
4. Hosted the first Professionals Advocating and Caring for Kids (P.A.C.K.) meeting, though similar events date back to the 1990's
5. Implemented a new imaging system, using OnBase software
6. Introduced the first Court Employee Satisfaction Survey
7. Hosted the first Bench/Bar Meeting

### 2008 – “Access to Justice: Responding to the Community”

1. Began planning for a Courthouse Learning Center in the new Ottawa County Courthouse
2. Began planning for a Legal Self-Help Center in the new Ottawa County Courthouse

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3. Implemented the “Community Report Card” for Juvenile Services
  4. Juvenile Services launched the Adventures in Mentoring (AIM) program in partnership with the Michigan State University Extension
  5. Implemented the Victim Support Services Program in Juvenile Services
  6. Completed the Access and Fairness Survey, an updated version of the “Court User Survey” adapted from the NCSC CourTools
  7. Updated the Courts’ Strategic Plan

#### 2009 – “Inspiring Public Trust”

1. Opened the new Ottawa County Courthouse
2. Opened the Legal Self-Help Center
3. Forty-three staff successfully completed the Court Management Program through the National Center for State Courts – Institute for Court Management
4. Implemented the female-specific Lighthouse Program in the Juvenile Detention Center
5. Completed the second Court Employee Satisfaction Survey

#### 2010 – “Re-Thinking the Courts”

1. Leadership Team members completed the NCSC’s Court Executive Development Program and implemented the Building Bench Strength Program within the 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts
2. Introduced FOC Booting Project
3. Revamped the Juvenile Services reimbursement program
4. Legal Self-Help Center served 2,500+ patrons during its first year of operation
5. Opened the Challenge Ropes Course to community groups
6. Completed the third Access and Fairness Survey
7. Published the *Ottawa County Judicial Biography* book

#### 2011 – “Re-Engineering the Courts”

1. Implemented performance measures through the use of NCSC CourTools
2. Developed the Citizen’s Law School as part of annual Law Day celebrations
3. Implemented the Electronic Judges Calendar through MICA
4. Launched the Juvenile Justice Vision 20/20 initiative
5. Introduced the Arrears Forgiveness Program in FOC
6. Implemented use of Writs to Intercept State of Michigan income tax refunds from litigants who owed outstanding financial obligations to the Court
7. Completed the third Court Employee Satisfaction Survey
8. Opened FOC satellite office in Holland

#### 2012 – “Measuring Success”

1. Conducted several High-Performance Court Framework workshops with the NCSC
2. Reviewed and updated Court information on the County’s website – [www.miottawa.org](http://www.miottawa.org)
3. Trial Division collections surpassed \$1,000,000
4. Implemented the Shakespeare Behind Bars program in JJI and the OCJDC
5. Legal Self-Help Center expanded to offer services at the Probate Court

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6. Ottawa FOC selected as a pilot county for the new state program; Compromise Arrears in Return for On-Time Support (CAROTS)
  7. Completed the fourth Access and Fairness Survey

#### 2013 – “High Performing Courts”

1. Probate Register completed the NCSC’s Court Executive Development Program and plans to implement a Volunteer Guardianship Program
2. Completed the fourth Court Employee Satisfaction Survey
3. Developed and implemented a Business Court Plan
4. Developed a Concurrent Jurisdiction Plan
5. Expanded the Legal Self-Help Center to include a satellite office in Holland
6. Completed the “Framing of the Judges” project

#### 2014 – “Making a Difference”

1. Conducted successful all staff training with Dr. Roger Hall
2. Collaborated with Sheriff’s Department to add second deputy to FOC Bench Warrant Team
3. Worked with Mediation Services to certify additional court employees
4. Fulfilled statutory duties with Child Death Review Team
5. Implemented YLS (Youth Level of Services) Risk/Needs Assessment program
6. Successfully completed a Michigan Supreme Court financial audit
7. Developed a Technology Action Plan with NCSC
8. Installed “Lady Justice” display as part of Law Day activities
9. Hosted the first Domestic Relations Law Summit
10. Completed review and updating of the Courts’ Strategic Plan

#### 2015 – “Making a Difference”

1. Trained Treatment staff in and implemented evidence-based Functional Family Therapy.
2. Friend of the Court office absorbed paternity establishment responsibilities from the Prosecuting Attorney.
3. The Juvenile Detention Center received high marks in the American Correctional Association (ACA) certification process.
4. Probate staff received recognition for exemplary customer service.
5. 92% of youth were successfully discharged from supervision.
6. Felony collections exceeded \$1 million for the fifth consecutive year.

#### 2016 – “Fulfilling Our Mission”

1. Hosted the courts’ first Volunteer Appreciation Day.
2. Conducted an active shooter drill in the courthouse in Grand Haven to promote staff awareness and safety.
3. Received County Innovation Grant award to add a third Sheriff’s Deputy and FOC Account Clerk to Friend of the Court bench warrant team.
4. Met or exceeded almost 100% of SCAO Performance Measures.
5. Participated in review and selection of a new Jury System vendor to improve juror satisfaction, jury performance measures and reduce juror-related costs.

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6. Obtained significant grant funding for the Adult Drug Treatment Court.
  7. Updated Emergency Site Plans for West Olive and Grand Haven court locations.
  8. Friend of the Court office was recognized by the Michigan Office of Child Support as “Top Performing Large Sized County in the State.”
  9. Reduced the number of juveniles in residential placement from thirteen to three.
  10. Juvenile probation violations were reduced by 10%.
  11. The Legal Self-Help Center assisted 4,480 individuals.
  12. The 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit, 58<sup>th</sup> District and Ottawa County Probate Courts hosted the Michigan Supreme Court at the Jenison Performing Arts Center for the Community Corrections Program. Nearly 1,300 high school students attended to hear oral arguments.
  13. Transitioned leadership under Chief Judge Jon Van Allsburg.
  14. The Friend of the Court office piloted a digital check-in process for staff.

### 2017 – “Administering Justice”

1. Welcomed and trained new Circuit Court judge Karen J. Miedema.
2. Reviewed and developed a new 2018-2020 Strategic Plan.
3. Expanded female-specific treatment in Lighthouse from eight to sixteen participants.
4. Implemented a music program for juvenile offenders.
5. Moved the Juvenile Justice Institute and Treatment Services Division in Holland to a larger facility to expand programming and education for youth.
6. Contracted with Grand Valley State University to analyze Youth Level of Service (YLS) data.
7. 95% of all juveniles reduced or maintained their overall YLS level (risk to offend).
8. Analyzed state court data and drafted a report on the state’s Raise the Age/Youth in Prison initiative.
9. Prepared and submitted a Compliance Plan related to the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission legislation.
10. Added a third Sheriff’s Deputy to Juvenile Court staff.
11. Fully implemented EPICS in juvenile probation with internal coaches maintaining validity (moved fully away from the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute).
12. Graduated four youth from the Juvenile Justice Institute.
13. Created a Court Employee Orientation Manual.
14. Circulated “thank you” cards to all Circuit and Court volunteers, including the Legal Self-Help Center and Juvenile Detention Center volunteers.
15. Juvenile Court conducted legislative tours and hosted a community meeting to help educate and build support for Court programs.
16. Conducted the first Active Shooter drill in West Olive courthouse and implemented recommendations based on the training.
17. Earned approximately \$1.2 million dollars in revenue for out-of-county bed rentals for the Juvenile Detention Center.
18. Transitioned juvenile and parental reimbursement to Clerk/Register of Deeds’ Office.
19. Implemented a new security team for the Juvenile/Probate Court in West Olive to support measures to improve security and quality of the building for employees and clients.
20. Transitioned to a new provider, Wedgwood, for adolescent substance abuse treatment (detention and community) to increase services available to clients and diversifying our use of PA2 Funds and Medicaid.
21. Expanded Ropes Course programming to include summer “camps”.



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22. Completed a second year of Functional Family Therapy and trained a therapist as an on-site coach.
  23. Successfully completed the Probate Court microfilm records project, converting decades of physical probate files to digital files for historical and genealogical use.
  24. Implemented an Alternative Work Location (AWL) pilot project to provide greater schedule flexibility for employees.
  25. Met or exceeded most state and federal performance standards.
  26. Implemented the Matterhorn ODR (online dispute resolution) software for child support show cause hearings.
  27. Collected in excess of \$39M in child support.

### Ongoing Projects and Initiatives

1. Court Technology Improvements
  - Interactive Video Technology
  - E-Filing
  - Video Conferencing
  - Electronic Document Management
  - JusticeSuite Software Development
  - Evidence Presentation Technology
  - Youth Level of Service (YLS) Risk/Need Data Analysis
  - BIS Courtroom Recording
  - Technology Advisory Group (TAG) – Ottawa County
  - Technology Implementation Committee (TIC) – Michigan Supreme Court
2. Court Security Initiative
  - Building Access Plan and Implementation
  - Court Security Team Development & Exercises
  - Emergency Site Plan Development
  - Building Security Assessment
  - Active Shooter Staff Training
3. Collaborative Partnerships
  - Ottawa County Bar Association
  - Ottawa County Administration and related County Departments
  - Ottawa County Sheriff's Office
  - State Court Administrative Office
  - Michigan Association of Circuit Court Administrators
  - Michigan Association of Drug Court Professionals
  - Michigan Association for Family Court Administration
  - Michigan Association of Juvenile and Probate Court Registers
  - Michigan Judges Association
  - Michigan Probate Judges Association
  - Friend of the Court Association
  - Juvenile Justice Vision 20/20
  - National Association for Court Management
  - National Judicial College
  - National Center for State Courts
  - State Justice Institute
  - Institute for Intergovernmental Research

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- Bureau of Justice Assistance
  - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
  - Michigan Juvenile Detention Association
  - Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget
  - Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice
  - Michigan Association of Counties
  - Michigan Association of Circuit Court Administrators
  - Catholic Charities of West Michigan
  - Pathways, MI
  - Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
  - Mediation Services
  - Bethany Christian Services
  - Barnabas Ministries
  - Grand Valley State University
  - BizStream
  - Wedgwood Christian Services
  - BRAINS of West Michigan
  - Ottawa Area Intermediate School District
  - Extended Grace
  - Walk the Beat
  - University of Michigan Data Lab
4. Annual Court Appointed Counsel evaluations
  5. Update and renegotiate Collective Bargaining Agreements
  6. Leadership Cohort
  7. Ottawa County Four C's Initiative
  8. Obtaining federal, state and local grant funding to support innovative programming