



KALAMAZOO COUNTY COURTS

2016-2019 Strategic Plan



July 1, 2016

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Letter from Courts’ Executive Judicial Council

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Supporting Work – Available Upon Request:

A: 2016 Strategic Planning Surveys – Summary of Findings

B: 2016 Focus Group Sessions – Summary of Findings

C: Trends Information



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Our Vision for the Future

The Kalamazoo County Courts are pleased to present our 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. Now more than at any time in the past, the courts in the State of Michigan are being called upon to change the way they operate. Courts are not immune from the challenging financial conditions, demographic shifts, and technological advances that impact all of our lives. For the first time in the history of our Courts, representatives of the Eighth District Court, Kalamazoo County Probate Court, and Ninth Judicial Circuit Court have joined together to develop a unified strategic plan for our future.

The idea for a strategic plan grew out of conversations in 2015 between three individuals: Hon. Curtis J. Bell, Chief Circuit/Probate Court Judge; Jill Booth, Region V Administrator for State Courts; and Richard A. Santoni, Chief District Court Judge. The Strategic Plan builds upon the work of the Executive Judicial Council created under the Concurrent Jurisdiction Plan approved in 2014, and the current members of the Council (along with the chief administrator of each of the three courts) comprised the Strategic Planning Committee. Moreover, the Strategic Plan seeks to carry out the Michigan State Court Administrative Office's call to measure performance to improve outcomes, implement technology to increase efficiency and improve access, and re-engineer the courts to streamline operations and save money.

The production and issuance of the Strategic Plan does not mark the conclusion of a process, but represents the beginning of the next phase of the evolution of the Kalamazoo County Courts. Implementing the action items set forth in the Plan will require considerable effort. Our collaborative process has produced a unified vision for the Courts, now it is up to all of the individual members that make up the Kalamazoo County Courts to make that vision a reality.

Christopher T. Haenicke
Executive Judge, Executive Judicial Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kalamazoo County Courts acknowledge the following entities and individuals for their valuable contributions to the Courts' 2016-2019 Strategic Plan.

The Courts are indebted to the State Justice Institute. Without the Institute's generous financial support, this strategic planning process would not have been possible.

The Courts also sincerely appreciate the work of Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey, President of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., who helped develop a strategic planning approach that met the Courts' needs and successfully guided the Courts through the strategic planning process.

We express the utmost thanks and gratitude to all of the internal and external respondents to the 2016 Strategic Planning Survey, as well as those who took part in the focus group meetings. Respondents/ participants included the judges and staff of the Kalamazoo County Courts, attorneys, and external partners. By sharing their ideas with the Courts, these individuals helped give direction to this long-range roadmap for the Courts.

Thanks is also owed to Steven E. Burnham, Suzanne M. Darling and Ann E. Filkins, court administrators and Strategic Planning Committee members, for their extra efforts to gather information used in the planning, coordinating schedules, handling logistics, etc., and for their open and candid participation in the planning process.

Finally, the Courts recognize the hard work and dedication of the members of the bench who thoughtfully and earnestly engaged in the planning process to ensure its success. Committee members include Judge Curtis J. Bell, Judge Anne E. Blatchford, Judge Stephen D. Gorsalitz, Judge Christopher T. Haenicke, and Judge Alexander C. Lipsey.

All of the above named entities and individuals were instrumental in helping the Courts develop a long-term strategic direction and establish priorities to better serve the residents of Kalamazoo County.

2016-2019 Strategic Plan

July 1, 2016

Section 1: Overview

The Kalamazoo County Courts embarked on a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2016 with grant funding from the State Justice Institute. The purpose was to develop a plan to: (1) improve services to court users and the community; (2) enhance the use of resources; and (3) increase efficiency and effectiveness of the Courts (e.g., govern more effectively, better manage cases, reduce duplication, streamline work processes, reduce/contain costs, etc.).

The strategic planning process, which was facilitated by Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., included:

1. Extensive outreach and information gathering from external partners, judicial officers, and court employees through focus group sessions, interviews, and surveys;
2. An analysis of internal and external trends;
3. A series of planning sessions with the Courts' Strategic Planning Committee comprised of members of the Executive Judicial Council and court administrators.

The Courts' Strategic Plan is presented below. It includes:

1. Updated mission, vision, and core values for the Courts;
2. Brief summary of the organizational assessment, which included a careful review of the results of 2016 Strategic Planning surveys and focus group sessions;
3. The key, strategic focus areas identified as being critically important for the future of the Courts;
4. Long-range goals and strategies for making changes and improvements; and
5. Annual strategic initiatives/priority projects (2016-2017).

To ensure implementation and follow-through, the Courts will use a combination of existing committees and newly formed teams to complete the annual priority initiatives/projects. Progress and accomplishments of the teams will be monitored and reported on regularly. Additionally, the Strategic Planning Committee will meet annually to review the Strategic Plan, modify the Plan as needed based on changing circumstances, and establish new priority projects for the next year.

Section 2: Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Below are the updated mission, vision, and core value statements for the Courts of Kalamazoo County. They represent the Courts' purpose, vision of the future, and guiding principles.

Mission of the Courts of Kalamazoo County:

Uphold the law and provide justice for all.

Vision for the Future:

As a leading and innovative court system, our vision is to:

-Enhance public trust, respect, and safety.
-Resolve legal matters in a fair and timely manner.
-Promote the success of individuals, families, and youth.

Core Values:

Just
User-Friendly
Service
Timely
Integrity
Collaborative
Effective

Section 3: Organizational Assessment – Summary of 2016 Strategic Planning Surveys and Focus Groups

After a thorough analysis of the information gathered through the Strategic Planning Surveys and focus groups, the Strategic Planning Committee summarized the Courts’ strengths, weaknesses, and potential threats as follows.

Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community and justice partner support; good relations 2. Timely disposition of legal matters/cases 3. Committed and quality judges 4. Competent and committed administrators 5. Customer oriented and competent staff 6. Respectful, courteous, professional, and fair treatment 7. Number of judicial officers/judicial resources 8. Commitment to problem solving/specialty courts 9. Striving to better use technology to increase service 10. Innovative and resourceful (e.g., seek grants, streamline work) 11. New Gull Road facility and maximize the use of space in other locations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal and external communication 2. Training and development of staff 3. Coordination and problem solving with partners 4. Internal judicial conflict and inter-court relations 5. Lack of data/research/evaluation to make decisions and improvements 6. Safety, security, and space 7. Supervision practices – soliciting input, delegation, staff empowerment, etc. 8. Use of technology – CMS, updated computers/printers, iPad, other tools 9. Court procedures, processes, legal terms, forms, etc. are difficult to understand; the Courts need to be more user-friendly 10. Lack of treatment services available in the community (e.g., substance abuse, mental health)

Potential Threats

1. Lack of adequate funding from the County and State
2. Outdated Court Rules (e.g., related to technology)
3. Evaluation of judicial resources by SCAO and effects on Kalamazoo County Courts
4. Uncertainty with new County Administration and Elected Board
5. Inertia and resistance to change
6. Declining public trust and confidence in the justice system (nationally)
7. Inability to meet/respond to the changing needs of court users and the community
8. Lagging behind in the use of technology

Summary:

As outlined in the next section, the Courts have many opportunities for continuing to improve services and use resources and operate more efficiently and effectively.

Section 4: Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), Goals, and Strategies

Summary of Implication of Trends: The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed many external and internal trends. They included: demographic/social, economic, technological, policy/political, and justice system trends. The Committee also reviewed internal trends including: filings and dispositions, age of cases, staffing patterns, cost of indigent defense, number of jury verdicts, and other workload trends. Below are plausible implications – the potential effects – of the many trends on Courts in the future.

1. The demographics and needs of court users will continue to change. There will likely be more Non-English speaking, more racially and culturally diverse, and more elderly and pro pers/self-represented court users in the future. The Courts are committed to enhancing and expanding services and making the Courts more accessible, user-friendly, and understandable. This includes enhancing language assistance, increasing self-help/legal services, ensuring ADA accessibility, expanding online access, and simplifying forms and procedures.
2. Court users with substance abuse and mental health issues will likely continue to increase. The Courts must continue to use innovative and evidence based practices (e.g., specialty courts, risk and needs assessment tools) to help court users succeed, reduce recidivism, and increase compliance with court orders. Collaborating with community partners to enhance and expand treatment and service options also will be important in the future.
3. While Kalamazoo’s economy is improving, a relatively high number of people are living below the poverty level. Lower income people may not have the current ability to pay fees, fines, restitution, etc.
4. Technological advances will continue at a rapid pace. The public will expect to be able to do business with the Courts remotely and 24 hours a day. Filing electronically, accessing case and court information remotely, and being able to pay fines and fees online are examples of current expectations. Additionally, the Courts increasingly need effective case management systems to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Integrating IT systems with other justice system partners to reduce redundancy and enhance information sharing also will be important in the future. In sum, the Courts must have and better use existing and emerging technologies and build an infrastructure that supports the work of the Courts.
5. On a national level, the public’s trust and confidence in government generally and the judicial branch specifically are on the decline. The Courts in Kalamazoo County are committed to improving the perception of the Courts and maintaining a positive image and relationship in their community. To do so, the Courts must be timely and fair and demonstrate equality and integrity. Increasing diversity, collaborating with partners, and having facilities that command respect also are essential for building and maintaining the public’s trust and respect.
6. Physical security, cyber security, and emergency preparedness are increasingly important in today’s society. The Courts must continually strengthen and increase safety measures to ensure the public, judges, and staff are safe and secure. The Courts also must proactively protect against cyber-attacks. Finally, the Courts must be prepared to respond effectively in

emergency situations such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, active shooter situations, and pandemics, to name a few.

7. There is a continued need to educate partners, stakeholders, and the community about the needs and priorities of the Courts. The Courts must advocate for needed resources and must partner with others to deliver justice and achieve positive case outcomes including a reduction in recidivism.
8. Fiscal resources will continue to be tight. Costs are increasing and the Courts' budgets are not keeping pace. The Courts are increasingly dependent on grants to provide innovative programs and services. The Courts will need to continue to advocate for needed resources (e.g., budget, staff, technology, facilities). They also are committed to being more efficient and effective with existing resources. This includes reducing and/or maintaining costs, consolidating functions and services, and reducing duplication. Additionally, the Courts needs to be able to use and /or shift judicial and staff resources as needed to meet case and workload demands.
9. Filings for some case types are on the decline. However, the numbers do not accurately reflect the additional work required of judicial officers and staff to handle motions, specialty court matters, and post adjudication hearings and activities such as supervision of offenders, Friend of Court enforcement, collections and the like.
10. The workforce of the Courts is aging (similar to the general population). The Courts must proactively prepare for the next generation of leaders, managers, and staff.
11. Staff generally are satisfied with their jobs, according to the strategic planning survey results. However, for the Courts to be able to recruit, retain, and continue to motivate the workforce, additional improvements are needed. Examples include: more training and development opportunities, advancement opportunities, opportunity to have more input into changes affecting staff, and updating space and equipment.

Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), Goals, and Objectives. Strategic focus areas represent large, critically important areas the Courts must address in the years ahead. Goals are end targets; goals are ultimately what the Courts hope to achieve in the long-term. Objectives are the means by which the goals will be achieved; they are general strategies for achieving the goals.

**Strategic Focus Areas
(2016)**

1. Governance and Operational Efficiencies
2. Access and Responsive Services
3. Caseflow Management
4. Infrastructure
5. Workforce Development and Satisfaction
6. External Relations

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #1: Court Governance and Operational Efficiencies

Description: The Courts are committed to developing and strengthening court governance and policy making practices as well as making improvements that will enhance administrative and operational efficiencies. Strengthening court governance will foster effective policy and decision making, increase consistency, and enhance cooperation among the Courts. Additionally, continuing to make administrative and operational improvements will enhance access and services to court users, reduce duplication and costs, and enhance the use of limited resources (e.g., fiscal, staff, space, etc.).

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The Courts' governance structure will foster sound policy, consistency, and cooperation among the Courts.

- Obj. 1: Improve communication, relationships, and internal workings of the EJC.
- Obj. 2: Clarify the role of and strengthen the EJC.
- Obj. 3: Fully implement the Concurrent Jurisdiction Plan.
- Obj. 4: Evaluate and improve the use of judicial resources.
- Obj. 5: Adopt and implement consistent court policies and practices.
- Obj. 6: Manage funding and resources in a coordinated and integrated manner.

Goal 2: The Courts' administrative structure and functions/departments will be efficient and effective.

- Obj. 1: Merge/streamline management and organizational structures.
- Obj. 2: Reduce number of and/or combine duplicative court functions and departments.
- Obj. 3: Increase cooperation and sharing of funding and other resources among Courts.
- Obj. 4: Implement consistent HR policies and procedures across all Courts.
- Obj. 5: Enhance access to and use data to inform resource and operational decisions.

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
1. Review and refine EJC Bylaws	Responsibilities of the Chief Judges and EJC are clarified Decision making authority and membership are strengthened Assigned strategic initiative are completed and implemented	July 1, 2016 – September 30, 2016	EJC
2. Create and submit a combined budget for Circuit and Probate Courts	One Budget presented and adopted for Circuit/ Probate Courts	July 1, 2016 – Sept. 31, 2016	Judge Bell, Darling, Burnham

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
3. Consolidate Court Functions where feasible (e.g., assess feasibility of following functions: Collections, IT support and implementation, Court security, Problem Solving Courts, etc.)	Recommendations provided to Chief Judges and decision made. Preparations for implementation completed (if applicable)	October 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, Burnham
4. Develop additional joint local administrative orders and policies (e.g., Wi-Fi policy; Social media, HR practices including performance appraisals, Alternative Service including text messaging, Policy dealing with unethical conduct, etc.)	Joint local administrative orders and policies adopted and implemented	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham
5. Collaborate on new funding/budget requests where feasible (e.g., new positions, CIP, etc.)	Joint budget requests prepared and requested	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham

Additional Initiatives Considered but a Lower Priority for Year 1

Evaluate and develop ideal, consolidated organizational structure (e.g., consider/develop options; conduct cost analysis; identify duplicative positions and functions, etc.)

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #2: Access and Responsive Services

Description: Enhancing access to the Courts and providing services that respond to and meet the needs of an increasingly diverse community are high priorities for the Courts of Kalamazoo County. As a leading and innovative court system, the Courts are committed to improving the use of technology, enhancing assistance and services to court users, using evidence based practices, and collaborating with partners to enhance treatment and increase positive case outcomes.

Improvement suggestions related to this SFA according to the 2016 Strategic Planning Survey and focus groups included:

1. Make the Courts more user-friendly and understandable (e.g., simplify and standardize procedures);
2. Enhance services to court users who are self-represented;
3. Enhance access to court and case information;
4. Improve and expand onsite assistance (e.g., one-stop window; open additional windows);
5. Provide helpful resources (e.g., educational information, forms, etc.) to court users.

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The Courts are easily accessible and understandable.

- Obj. 1: Improve online access to court and case information.
- Obj. 2: Better use existing and emerging technologies to increase access and enhance ability to conduct court business.
- Obj. 3: Enhance services to self-represented litigants.
- Obj. 4: Expand language assistance to court users.
- Obj. 5: Improve the juror experience.
- Obj. 6: Improve physical access to court facilities.
- Obj. 7: Collaborate with partners to enhance and expand services to those in need.
- Obj. 8: Educate the public about the Courts.

Goal 2: The Courts' programs will promote the success of individuals, families, and youth.

- Obj. 1: Expand the use of evidence-based practices (e.g., sex offender treatment programs, neglect and abuse cases).
- Obj. 2: Implement new and innovative programs and services.
- Obj. 3: Collaborate with community and treatment providers to enhance and expand programs and services.
- Obj. 4: Assess and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services.

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
6. Implement new Indigent Defense Standards (consistent across all courts)	Indigent Defense Standards are Implemented Improvements are made to Courts' Indigent Defense practices	July 1 2016 – June 30, 2017	Judge Santoni Judge Bridenstine
7. Develop one Court Website	Website launched	July 1, 2016 June 30, 2017	Website Team
8. Advance implementation of e-filing and online/kiosk payments of fines, fees, restitution	Advancements to and/or e-filing implemented	July 1, 2016 June 30, 2017	Darling and IT Staff Filkins and IT Staff
9. Implement Veteran's Court (i.e., one court for both misdemeanor and felony cases)	Veteran's Court handling both misdemeanor and felony cases implemented for Kalamazoo County	September 30, 2016 (dependent on receipt of SCAO grant)	Veteran's Court Team (includes external partners)
10. Implement Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment Program	Program Implemented	In progress Complete by June 30, 2017	Darling and Team
11. Evaluate/Develop a collective approach for handling change in age of juveniles from 17-18 years (raising the age limit for juveniles)	Collective approach developed.	In progress Complete by June 30, 2017	EJC
12. Evaluate the Juvenile On-Track Program re: recidivism (develop an evaluation model for court programs)	Program evaluated and recommendations for improvement implemented Evaluation model developed	In progress Complete by June 30, 2017	Darling and Team

Additional Initiatives Considered but a Lower Priority for Year 1

Develop one/combine On-Call list

Expand/implement felony DUI Court

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #3: Caseflow Management

Description: The Courts of Kalamazoo County have a history of resolving legal matters in a timely manner in accordance with Michigan’s time standards. They remain committed to reducing unnecessary delay and continuing to resolve matters in a fair and expeditious manner. While the Courts do very well on time to disposition, improvements are needed in how cases are managed. Specifically, the Courts see the need to improve caseflow management practices including efficient case processing, effective scheduling, early control and manage pace of litigation, standardized/consistent practices (e.g., fines, fees, costs; bond practices, etc.).

In particular, the survey and focus group results identified the following areas for improvement:

1. Improve arraignment and bond processes (e.g., reinstate walk-in arraignments at District Court; make bonds more specific for easy interpretation);
2. Improve scheduling practices including allow more time for some hearings to avoid adjournments, schedule fewer cases, and coordinate schedules within and across courts for attorneys and other partners;
3. Strengthen caseflow management practices (e.g., use pre-trial and settlement conferences; reconsider dedicated trial weeks and the impact on partners; add early facilitation of civil and probate matters; reduce the number of adjournments; secure permanency in a timely manner);
4. Start hearings on time (e.g., reduce wait times; be sensitive to overtime costs for law enforcement);
5. Streamline processes and procedures;
6. Collaborate and problem solve with partners to implement case management practices that enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The Courts’ cases will be managed in a fair, effective, and efficient manner.

- Obj. 1: Improve arraignment and bond processes.
- Obj. 2: Enhance scheduling practices.
- Obj. 3: Implement innovative and effective caseflow management practices.
- Obj. 4: Start hearings on time.
- Obj. 5: Communicate and collaborate with partners in improving caseflow management practices.
- Obj. 6: Streamline and implement consistent processes and procedures.
- Obj. 7: Use judicial resources effectively.
- Obj. 8: Improve/convert/integrate case management systems.
- Obj. 9: Enhance the use of existing and emerging technologies (e.g., video-conferencing, text messaging, business intelligence/data).

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
13. Revisit/improve the arraignment and preliminary exam processes (e.g., address treatment provider concerns; allow walk-ins at the Court; etc.)	Arraignment and preliminary exam processes improved – efficient and effective for court, partners, and litigants	July 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016	Judge Santoni, Judge Bridenstine, and Filkins
14. Complete analysis and feasibility of unifying Circuit/Probate case management systems	Recommendations submitted and decision made Preparations for implementation completed (if applicable)	July 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016	Darling and Burnham, and Judge Bell
15. Improve scheduling practices (e.g., conduct focus group with attorneys to discuss/problem solve scheduling issues; etc.)	Scheduling practices improved based on recommendations from attorneys/partners	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017	Docket Review Team
16. Implement and assess results of creating Civil and Criminal Divisions in Circuit Court; develop recommendations for better use of judicial resources in all Courts	Recommendations submitted and decisions made Preparations for implementation completed (if appropriate)	July 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016	Judge Lipsey, Giguere, Bridenstine, Darling

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #4: Infrastructure – Facilities, Security, and Technology

Description: Having an effective infrastructure that supports the business of, and promotes trust and confidence in, the Courts is essential. Improvements to facilities, security, and technology are needed.

The Courts are committed to ensuring facilities: (1) are easily accessible and user friendly, (2) have requisite space for court users, partners, judicial officers, and staff (e.g., meeting rooms, jury rooms, courtrooms, offices, holding cells, etc.), and (3) are safe and secure. Currently, the Courts are located in multiple facilities all of which have varying strengths and needs. Additionally, the County is beginning to plan for future court facilities exploring various options. Collaboration among/within the Courts as well as with the County is critically important to ensure the Courts have facilities that meet future public and court needs.

Additionally, significant improvements are needed to the Courts' technology infrastructure(s) (e.g., case management systems, computer hardware and software, other equipment such as video conferencing, tablets, printers to support the work of staff and judicial officers). Currently, the Courts have multiple case management systems that are not integrated and lag functionality.

Suggested improvements per the Survey and Focus Groups were as follows:

1. Improve facilities including parking, space, furniture, etc.;
2. Seek one building/create a court campus;
3. Go paperless (e.g., implement e-filing for all cases, improve e-access to information/exhibits; etc.);
4. Share one case management system and/or improve integration of and access to various systems;
5. Improve wireless access;
6. Improve technology functionality such as text messages/reminders, video-conferencing, ability to pay fines and fees electronically, etc.

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: Court facilities will be easily accessible, safe, and promote trust and confidence in the judicial branch.

- Obj. 1: Develop plans for new/improved court facilities in collaboration with the County.
- Obj. 2: Improve/modernize existing space and facilities.
- Obj. 3: Consider the needs of partners and the public in improving court facilities.
- Obj. 4: Enhance courthouse safety and security.
- Obj. 5: Enhance emergency preparedness.

Goal 2: The Courts will have a technological infrastructure that enhances services and supports court operations.

- Obj. 1: Improve, simplify, and integrate case management systems.
- Obj. 2: Enhance access to and use data to inform resource and operational decisions (e.g., business intelligence)

- Obj. 2: Implement emerging technologies to enhance services and increase efficiency (e.g., e-notices/reminders, text messaging, etc.)
 Obj. 3: Upgrade computer and other equipment.
 Obj. 4: Enhance cyber security.
 Obj. 5: Advocate for modernizing Michigan court rules.

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
17. Develop/implement an emergency response/ security alert system for the Courts	Emergency Response/Security Alert System implemented Communication and training completed	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	Safety and Security Committee
18. Develop/update a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for the Courts (including assess and minimize cyber vulnerabilities)	Revised COOP completed and adopted Communication and training completed	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	Safety and Security Committee
19. Develop one voice re: new court facility/ campus (explore options, assess pros/cons, etc.)	Desired options/scenarios completed Speaking with one voice about location, needs, desires, etc.	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	Judges Bell and Santoni
20. Educate/train judges and staff to access all case management systems	Training of judges and staff completed	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	IT Training Team
21. Explore approaches to CMS/Other Vendor Integration (i.e., determine what it will take to ensure systems communicate with one another)	Analysis completed Recommendations presented Decision made	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #5: Workforce Development and Satisfaction

Description: The Courts are committed to making the Courts a better place to work, which includes developing the workforce and making improvements that will increase engagement and satisfaction. Ensuring the workforce has the requisite skills and talents to succeed in the future is essential to providing the highest quality of services and justice to the community. Additionally, the Court's want to make improvements ensuring they can attract, engage, and retain an engaged, qualified, and satisfied workforce in the years ahead.

While the overall strength of the workplace and job satisfaction ratings by staff were quite high, continued improvements are needed. Examples from the survey results and focus groups included:

1. Improve management and supervisory practices (e.g., solicit/listen to input and suggestions of staff; involve staff in making changes; show staff they are valued; hold all staff accountable; less micro-management; treat all staff fairly; increase consistency among supervisors; etc.).
2. Improve communication and teamwork within and across Courts (e.g., share more information; keep staff informed of changes; encourage teamwork/collaboration; more gatherings).
3. Provide more training, cross-training, and development opportunities for all staff.
4. Improve employee recognition and appreciation.
5. Improve pay, benefits, perks, and incentives (e.g., implement modern and innovative work and pay practices such as alternative/flexible work schedules, incentives).
6. Develop and plan for the next generation of leaders (e.g., succession plan).

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The Courts' workforce has the skills/competencies to succeed today and in the future.

- Obj. 1: Increase training and educational opportunities for staff.
- Obj. 2: Increase cross-training and development opportunities for staff.
- Obj. 3: Recruit and hire diverse staff with new skills and experiences.
- Obj. 4: Develop and plan for the next generation of Court leaders and managers.

Goal 2: Court staff are engaged and satisfied.

- Obj. 1: Improve management and supervisory practices.
- Obj. 2: Improve communication and information sharing within and across Courts.
- Obj. 3: Enhance teamwork within and across Courts.
- Obj. 4: Implement consistent and progressive HR procedures and practices within and across the Courts.
- Obj. 5: Improve employee recognition and appreciation.
- Obj. 6: Enhance advancement/promotional opportunities within and across the Courts.
- Obj. 7: Promote an innovative and motivating work environment.

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
22. Create/implement an apprentice program to develop internal staff (e.g., on the job learning, rotations, job shadowing, lunch and learns, etc. to increase knowledge, skills, and abilities; build an internal talent pool)	Apprentice Program developed and implemented	July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017	Training and Development Team
23. Participate in the County's Leadership Academy (i.e., enroll several staff in this program)	Court staff have participated in the County's Leadership Academy (if available)	When available	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham
24. Include staff in special projects/opportunities to be involved in making changes (e.g., front end exploration and brainstorming)	Staff have been involved in making changes/improvements, priority projects, and/or policy development	July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017	Morale Booster Committee
25. Participate in the State's incentive based clerk certification program	Courts have participated in/sent staff through the State's certification program	January 2017 June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham
26. Assess classification and pay and evaluate hard to fill positions (e.g., nurses, IT)	Classification/Pay has been evaluated and adjustments/changes implemented	July 1, 2016 June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham

Strategic Focus Area (SFA) #6: External Relations

Description: The Courts have enjoyed good relations with the County, justice system, and community partners in the past. To maintain and enhance these relations which are needed to provide the highest quality of justice services to the people of Kalamazoo County, the Courts realize the need to improve communication, cooperation, and collaboration in the future.

Suggested improvements from the survey and focus groups included:

1. Speaking with one voice;
2. Improving communication/information sharing;
3. Soliciting and considering input from external partners;
4. Increasing collaborative problem solving;
5. Keeping partners apprised of changes;
6. Increasing transparency;
7. Increase understanding of partner agencies;
8. Working together to enhance the justice system.

Long Range Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1: The Courts will communicate and collaborate effectively with justice system and community partners.

- Obj. 1: Improve communication and information sharing.
- Obj. 2: Improve relations among the bench, bar, and justice system partners.
- Obj. 3: Participate in forums for interagency problem solving.
- Obj. 4: Form and speak with one voice.
- Obj. 5: Meet with and increase understanding of partner agencies.
- Obj. 6: Communicate and educate about the Courts' needs and priorities.

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives/Priority Projects:

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
Highest Priorities			
27. Conduct targeted meetings/forums with partners to discuss important topics (e.g., communication, scheduling practices, treatment services; evaluation of programs; arraignment policy/process; develop Collective Approach to IVT with Partners; etc.)	Partners are educated and involved in making systems changes (e.g., IVT, civil division, social workers, etc.)	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, Burnham

2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives	Desired Outcomes/Deliverables	Start & Completion Dates	Primary Responsibility (Lead Person/Team)
28. Develop Frequently Asked Questions for court users (e.g., litigants, family members, the public, partners) – compile answers, tips, resources, etc.)	FAQs developed and available on Website, at counters, etc.	July 1, 2016 - June, 30, 2017	FAQ Team
29. Improve Bench/Bar meetings (e.g., explore frequency; more input into agenda items; etc.)	Bench/Bar meetings strengthened – specific topics addressed, court decisions are made with input from bar, changes have been implemented, etc.	In progress June 30, 2017	Filkins, Darling, and Burnham
30. Strengthen/explore enhanced partnership with Medical School (e.g., greater use of medical students for exams; add experiential training of students involved in drug courts; etc.)	Medical students used to help fill void/enhance services to court users Partnership with Medical School enhanced	In progress June 30, 2017	Burnham