

Waukesha County



Executive Summary Circuit Court Services



Strategic Plan 2014 – 2016

Waukesha County Mission Statement

“The mission of Waukesha County government is to promote the health, safety and quality of life of citizens while fostering an economically vibrant community. We are committed to delivering effective, high quality programs and services in a courteous and fiscally prudent manner.”

Waukesha County Strategic Outcomes

A safe county

An economically vibrant county

An environmentally responsible county

A well-planned county

A county that assists at-risk citizens

A county that provides customers with quality programs and services

A county that provides cost-effective services delivered with competence and skill

Waukesha County Focus Group Summary

In 2013, Baker Tilley was hired as a consultant to Waukesha County to conduct three focus groups to solicit feedback from the public on a range of issues including:

- What are critical issues according to citizens of the County?
- What do citizens deem to be most important to their quality of life?
- What citizens and consumers prefer in regards to services?
- How should the County pay for services and at what level of quality should they be provided?
- What is the public’s view on service delivery alternatives?

County stakeholders confirmed that priorities of this county remain largely unchanged from the priorities established in 2005 when the last series of community focus groups were conducted. Overall county residents are pleased with the quality, level and value of services for the price they pay. When asked about quality of life issues, citizens ranked a “safe” county and an “economically vibrant” county as the most important outcomes for county stakeholders. The Circuit Court system is a critical component to ensure a safe county.

Citizens were asked at what level of quality should the county services be provided assuming that higher quality means higher cost. Based on a weighting of 1 for low response, 2 for medium response, and 3 for a high response, the courts came in 6th overall with a 2.25 rating. Law Enforcement, Human Services, Services of the Aging, Highway Maintenance and Park Maintenance ranked above the Courts.

Like most consumers, our citizens want a high level of service for the lowest possible cost. Yet our citizens are quick to say they do not want to jeopardize public safety, which consistently tops the list of priorities. Economic vibrancy follows with citizens ranking fiscal responsibility and low tax rates high as well. Clearly, the citizen groups are not willing to sacrifice public safety or stifle the business community in the name of holding the line on taxes.

Citizens were very receptive to finding alternative arrangements for service delivery through cooperative efforts with other jurisdictions or contracting for services in a narrower range of service areas. Support for sharing of service delivery between governments increased from 35% in 2005, to 54% in 2013. Over 90% of focus group respondents indicated support for the sharing of services was a good idea or acceptable depending upon circumstances.

In summary, the limited data collected from these focus groups as a whole tells us that citizens are willing to look at new ways of doing business. Most believe the County is providing the right amount of services with only 12% stating the County should do more. The quality of the services we provide remains ranked highest followed by low cost/tax impact and speed and efficiency of delivery. Citizens clearly want to maintain a high quality services knowing that higher quality means higher cost. Data shows 71% of citizens are more likely to support a 0%-3% property tax increase in order to pay for County services, but what is most telling is that 26% of citizens want a reduction or no property tax increase whatsoever. This is up from 14% in 2005 and tells us that a growing number of citizens have no appetite for increased spending yet 90% of respondents have moderate to strong support for increasing user fees. Certainly any tax increase needs to be well defined and solidly justified to gain support.

Overall, there is a clear message that public safety, child protection, law enforcement and the court services are highly valued, while many back-office government functions could be targets for reduction. There is a clear message that justice and public safety overwhelmingly hold the top funding priority should county service reductions become necessary.

Waukesha County Circuit Court Services

Mission Statement

The mission of Waukesha County Circuit Court Services is to serve the citizens of Waukesha County by providing superior justice support services and assistance to all court system participants in a timely, efficient and ethical manner, and to enhance public confidence in our justice system.

Statement of Purpose

“Circuit Court Services is responsible for coordinating and managing the business and financial operations of the Waukesha County Circuit Courts. The State Constitution, state statutes, state Supreme Court rules, court orders, and county policies generally prescribe the duties of this department.

All of our efforts as state and county employees of the Wisconsin Circuit Court System are dedicated to preserving the constitutional protections of our citizens and residents, enforcing the duly enacted laws of the state, aiding the resolution of private and public disputes, and maintaining the integrity and public trust of an independent judiciary in our democratic political system.”

Circuit Court and Court Management Services

These are the major statutory services supported by or provided by the Waukesha County Circuit Courts, its Judges and Court Commissioners, the four divisions in the Clerk of Circuit Court's Office, Family Court Services, the Clerk of Juvenile Court Office, and the Register in Probate Office:

- Provide a legal forum for the independent, neutral, and timely enforcement of the laws of the State of Wisconsin, Waukesha County, and its various municipalities.
- Provide for the legal disposition of criminal felony, misdemeanor, and traffic matters.
- Improve the safety of the community through the incarceration or monitoring of persons convicted of illegal activities, and/or the imposition of monetary penalties intended to curb dangerous or inappropriate activities. Assist in managing pre- and post- dispositional alternate sanctions.
- Provide for the legal resolution of family related issues including marital disagreement, divorce, paternity determination, child support, and child custody and visitation.
- Provide for the legal resolution of civil disputes between persons, businesses, and/or governmental units involving issues of money, injury, services, property, legal rights or equity.
- Provide direction to law enforcement agencies in conflicts between persons involving abuse or harassment and restraining orders.
- Ensure the rights of persons detained and/or monitored for various mental infirmities are observed and that treatment options are made available for them as required by law.
- Direct the legal detention or supervision of juveniles who are adjudicated delinquent, have broken the law, or are unable to conform their behavior in their family, schools, or community settings.
- Provide legal oversight for adults and juveniles who are in need of protection or services.
- Address the security or remuneration needs of crime victims as required by law.
- Ensure that the closing of an estate and the transfer of assets is performed in accordance with the wishes of the deceased and the requirements of the law.
- Ensure that cases brought before the circuit court are addressed within the legal standards established by federal, state, and local law without regard for gender, ethnicity, religious belief, national origin, sexual preference, or financial ability.
- Ensure that all court minutes, exhibits, records, papers, and case indices are kept, maintained accurately, and available publicly as required by state law.
- Receipt, record, and disburse funds as directed by state law or the court.
- Assist the public by providing information and/or procedural guidance on court services as allowed by law.

- Qualify and summon county residents for service as jurors for the circuit courts.
- Coordinate services and business efforts with other justice system agencies as directed by law and collaborative business processes.

Environmental Scan

Recent state and local budget crises have required courts to do more with less while trying to manage more complex caseloads. At the same time, courts are struggling with dramatic changes in their service populations (i.e. self-represented, aging, limited English speaking) and technology advancements that are fundamentally affecting the way in which courts operate. Courts throughout the nation are experiencing policy change, resource issues and trends that affect the judiciary that may not have been on the radar screen just ten years ago. Trends and challenges in Waukesha County in many ways mirror those at the national and state level. This environmental scan will outline national trends that are affecting courts today. It will then provide information on the Wisconsin Court System and its top priorities and initiatives, and end with an analysis of the local court environment and priorities.

National Level Scan

Court Trends in 2025 and Future of Courts 2025: The Next Big Thing, was discussed at the National Association for Court Management (NACM) 2014 Midyear Conference. The report discusses the probability of 71 different court related scenarios potentially occurring by the year 2025. The probability was assessed by conducting two surveys of court professionals from around the country and around the world. Waukesha County Clerk of Courts reviewed the report and the following is a list of ten scenarios from the highly likely or reasonably likely probability assessments categories of the report:

1. Court Forms Will Be Available On the Internet
2. Web-Based Information Systems
3. “Remote Interpretation”
4. Digital Recording Systems
5. Training Through Distance Learning
6. “Paperless” Courts
7. Centrally Stored Data
8. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Will Be Norm
9. Centralized Payments
10. Case Complexity Will Increase

Court Forms Will Be Available On the Internet – Parties, particularly the self-represented, will be able to complete forms online interactively and electronically file them. Parties will have access to “fill in the blanks” types of forms and also “intelligent forms” where the party is asked a series of questions and then completes one or more forms based on the answers to the questions. Internet forms help to decrease court costs because the court will no longer be required to maintain a stock pile available of old forms that must be discarded when a statute or rule changes. Parties can complete the internet forms at the courthouse or home thereby taking as much time as they need. Intelligent forms can provide professional looking pleadings, which court officials appreciate since they can work with them easily.

Web-Based Information Systems – Having a website is one of the best ways to disseminate valuable court information to customers. It saves significant amounts of money in phone calls and office visits that

customers do not need to have fundamental questions answered. Website information will need to be kept up-to-date.

“Remote Interpretation” - Remote interpretation can be implemented using telephonic communications or audio-video connections which is necessary for American Sign Language (ASL). The court may use a professional vendor service or have in-house interpreter staff. Some audio-video operations have one-way video links where the interpreter can see the courtroom participants, but not vice versa; other operations offer two-way video links where the interpreter can also be seen. After the initial set-up costs, remote interpretation can have enormous cost savings because the court no longer pays interpreter travel costs. In addition, remote interpretation is an efficient way to provide interpretation of lesser seen languages. Furthermore, it may be a necessity in order for the court to be in compliance with Title VI.

Digital Recording Systems – Electronic recordings will become the official record for court proceedings because it will save the court money.

Training Through Distance Learning - Staff training will be offered through webinars, videos, downloadable PowerPoints, etc. Distance learning can reach a broad array of court employees quickly and cheaply. It requires much less concern over individual attendee schedules because attendees can complete the module at their own pace and within their own schedule. It can be less expensive because attendees do not need to travel to training sessions. It is an effective way to convey fundamental information about courts and court operations and it can be a more productive way to train staff.

“Paperless” Courts – Courts will convert to document imaging or electronic filing thereby going “paperless” and going to “paper-on-demand.”

Centrally Stored Data – This is data storage at the statewide level or regional level fed by multiple trial courts although the data may not be physically stored at a central location. The increase in centralized data storage, input, and transactions, centralized (state) centers for payment of traffic fines, payment of filing fees, restitution payments, and bail bond payments will become the norm. Real time access to payment, restitution, bond, case and criminal history information will become routine. Centralized data storage means smaller or less storage locally at less cost. It is easier for multiple jurisdictions to access.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Including Problem-Solving Courts, Will Be Norm - Courts routinely have ADR programs such as mediation, arbitration, settlement conferences and short trial for cases prior to trial. The success of and demand for problem-solving courts will grow. General and limited jurisdiction courts around the country will run problem-solving courts ranging from drugs and drunk driving, to gambling, petty theft, and “deadbeat” spouses. In November of 2012, the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee submitted Critical Issues: Planning Priorities for the Wisconsin Court System Fiscal Years 2012-2014 (PPAC 2012 Report) which discussed the momentum within the Wisconsin Court System and criminal justice system towards implementing evidence-based intervention and treatment approaches that help to maintain public safety while reducing incarceration and recidivism rates. Examples of these programs include Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Project, drug, OWI, mental health and veterans courts, day reporting, electronic monitoring, and community service programs.

Centralized Payments - The PPAC 2012 Report discusses a requested statutory change to consolidate the current county financial assistance programs, the circuit court support payment and guardian ad litem payment programs, into one payment program called the circuit court financial support program. This requested change included a more equitable formula for allocating funds thereby ensuring a continuing link between levels of circuit court activity and funding. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC), in the Trends in State Courts 2013 article “Oregon Courts Turn Crisis Into Opportunity,” discussed how in 2010

Oregon created a Central Services Unit to be an ancillary service provider to the courts. This moved higher-level court-accounting functions and many collection activities from the local trial courts to the State Court Administrator's office. The Central Services Unit has allowed for the courts to focus limited resources on delivering judicial services and it is estimated to result in saving 3 percent of current staff resources and generating \$9 million in additional revenue. Oregon is continuing to pursue innovative ideas and is piloting a centralized violations bureau in one circuit court. Oregon Circuit Courts use local violation bureaus to reduce fines using a uniform fine schedule and then accept payment by phone, mail, or in person. Centralizing the violations bureau functions provides one statewide number for the public to request a fine reduction and pay their fine over the phone, online, or by mail. This approach provides a convenient and uniform end-user experience for the public, reduces court workload, and decreases the overall number of staff needed to operate the violations bureau for all 36 circuit courts. Other states are using technology to help in debt collection. Nebraska uses texting, with the permission of the defendant, to send a reminder of payments due or obligations to be met and this has reduced the number of no-shows at court. Wisconsin utilizes text messaging for juror reminders today to reduce failure to appear rates. Michigan has developed collection video training for judges and collection staff.

Case Complexity Will Increase - Some types of cases will continue to become more and more complex. Domestic relations, juvenile dependency, guardianship, civil, probate, and adoption cases will become more complex as "the modern family and modern society" is changing. (Same-sex marriage, multiple marriages, immigration-impacted marriages – with associated divorce, custody, and support, intellectual property rights, new marijuana laws, identify theft, remote electronic testimony, graphic designers in trial preparation). Technology will make discovery more complex because of the volume of information available, particularly as people rely on recorded e-mail and text messaging for conversations previously conducted by telephone. With an increase in case complexity, differentiated case flow management will become more accurate and necessary. Court will be able to more accurately predict which cases will go to trial, how long those trials will take, and which cases will settle.

Wisconsin Scan

The Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC) advises the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the Wisconsin Director of State Courts on planning initiatives, the administrative structure of the court system, and the expeditious handling of judicial matters. The committee functions as the court system's long-range planning committee. After considering all of the issues confronting Wisconsin courts, PPAC identified planning priorities on which the Wisconsin Supreme Court will focus resources over the next biennium. PPAC's planning priorities for the Wisconsin Court System for fiscal years 2014-2016:

1. Judicial Independence, Selection and Ethics
2. Court Security and Facilities
3. Use of Technology
4. Evidence-Based Practices

Critical Issue 1: Judicial Independence, Selection and Ethics:

Wisconsin's judicial branch is an independent, separate, and co-equal branch of state government charged with preserving the rule of law, upholding Wisconsin's constitutional rights, and ensuring fair and impartial courts. The judicial branch must maintain its independence and resist pressures that would compromise the independence of judicial decision-making. Strong branch leadership and effective strategies of preserving the status of the judicial branch as an independent, separate, and co-equal branch of government is essential. Three action steps developed focus on the need to provide the necessary services while working with the resources to build a better judiciary and a more informed public.

- PPAC should explore ways to encourage judicial participation in established outreach programs such as the “Our Courts” program of the Wisconsin State Bar Association and the “Courts Connecting with Communities” toolkit of the Office of the Chief Justice to help educate the public on the role of the third branch.
- PPAC should review trial court judicial selection methods in other states and determine whether a committee should be convened to explore judicial selection in Wisconsin.
- PPAC should monitor and respond to legislation concerning judicial independence, selection and ethics as it relates to circuit court judges.

Critical Issue 2: Court Security and Facilities

A safe courthouse serves as the center of many governments, legal and community activities and is essential to the administration of justice. Courts must have proper court security procedures, technology, personnel, and architectural features, to protect the safety of the people and property within and around the courts, but also the integrity of the judicial process. Proper planning must involve collaboration with law enforcement offices, emergency agencies and governing bodies.

Supreme Court Rules created on Court Security, Facilities and Staffing assist counties and courts in making sound decisions about the court facilities that serve the citizens. PPAC and the Director of State Courts continue to work on Supreme Court Rules in addition to other recommendation made by the PPAC Subcommittee on Court Security. The following action steps were developed to strengthen the court system’s commitment to provide a safe court experience for clients and staff.

- PPAC should continue to support the annual Court Safety and Security Conference and encourage county court security and facilities teams to attend.
- PPAC should reconvene the Court Security Subcommittee to update the court security manual, being sure to address the different needs of small, medium and large counties, and include a self-assessment checklist to help determine security needs.
- PPAC should consider whether legislation or court rules are needed to establish required minimum court security standards.

Critical Issue 3: Use of Technology

Technology plays such a critical role in fulfilling the court’s mission and addressing critical issues. Technology is an essential component in operating the court system and is also used to assist in implementing and measuring the planning priorities of the court system. Modern technology must be employed to achieve administrative efficiencies and enhance the public’s access to court information and services. More than ever there is an increased demand to integrate technology into the courts. Public demand for online access to court information and services continues to grow. Technology helps the court system reinvent how it provides services and information to the public in an “on demand” world. The following action steps support this new reality while recognizing the constraints of court funding.

- PPAC should support and promote training for judges, attorneys, and court staff on available technology in the court system.
- PPAC should create guidelines for videoconferencing technology to be included in the update of the “Bridging the Distance” videoconferencing manual.
- PPAC should research the experiences of states that have implemented mandatory eFiling to determine how such a change might affect the Wisconsin Court System and coordinate the committee’s research with the work of the Chief Judge eFiling Implementation Subcommittee.

Critical Issue 4: Evidence-Based Practices

Critical issues facing the courts for the past decade or more include “sentencing reforms and alternatives” and “alcohol and drug dependency.” The Court system will continue to address these issues through evidence-based practices provided by the Effective Justice Strategies Subcommittee (EJS). Statewide training focusing on how to utilize evidence-based practices and concepts in pre-trial and sentencing decisions was conducted in Fall 2013. In 2013, the legislature increased funding by \$1.5 million for TAD (Treatment Alternatives and Diversion) which will allow 10-12 more counties to start drug and OWI courts and other jail or prison diversion programs. In the 2014-16 biennium, EJS will explore and assess the effectiveness of policies and programs, including drug and other specialty courts, designed to improve public safety and reduce incarceration. Defined actions steps include:

- EJS will continue to provide training on best practices standards in order to assist in the implementation of evidence-based initiatives in the criminal justice system, utilizing treatment court performance measures developed by the Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals.
- PPAC, through EJS, will encourage implementation and expansion of state and local evidence-based practices and programs.
- PPAC, through EJS, will conduct an evaluation of Wisconsin problem-solving courts.

While not defined as critical issues in the latest PPAC Critical Issues Report for 2014-2016, there are two additional topics that continue to have a significant impact on the courts. These include access to justice and mental health.

The court system has reacted to self-represented litigants by developing initiatives to increase litigant’s access to justice. PPAC created the Limited Scope Representation Subcommittee in 2010 to research existing limited scope representation programs and just recently participated in a public hearing on proposed amendments contained in a rule petition addressing the issue. The Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission created in 2009 aides the courts in improving the administration of justice by supporting civil legal services for those who cannot afford them. A self-help online law center has also been designed and reorganized to better assist self-represented litigants and provide access to information.

The Chief Justice’s Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Health partnered with the Wisconsin Court System’s Office of Judicial Education in 2012 to provide training to help judges understand how mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse disorders may be affecting individual and their interaction with the criminal justice system. Additional training for judges entitled “Judicial Work at the Interface of Mental Health and Criminal Justice” was also presented by the American Psychiatric Foundation and the Council of State Government. Those programs arose from the Task Force report issued in 2010 documenting existing programs and initiatives throughout the state, detailing gaps in the criminal justice and mental health systems, and making recommendations for improving our response to persons with mental illnesses in the criminal justice system. In 2013, a Speaker’s Task Force on Mental Health was formed to recommend improvements from eliminating barriers to treatment, to improving coordination of care, to addressing mental illness in the prison population. TAD programs specifically tailored to people with mental health diagnosis have expanded and the 2013-15 biennium state budget included \$1 million annually in new state funding for TAD grants.

PPAC also identified two emerging themes from their survey to collect information from internal and external stakeholders when identifying critical issues. They include funding and training. PPAC recognizes that courts struggle to obtain enough resources to meet existing goals and basic operations which cannot be neglected in favor of new initiatives. Changes depending on increased funding require strong justification. PPAC also recognized the critical role training plays in continually improving the quality of service the court system provides, which is why some of the action steps listed with the critical issues above also include a training goal.

(PPAC, January 2014, Critical Issues: Planning Priorities for the Wisconsin Court System 2014-2016)

Local Court Scan

The Impact of Technology - Waukesha County has been taking advantage of technologies throughout the system for as long as it has been available. In 2012 a \$990,000 capital project to update and integrate new courtroom technology into 17 court room venues was completed. State of the art sound, video, evidence presentation, and other technology was added to replace aging and antiquated equipment to meet the demands of current day users. A courthouse kiosks, digital court recording equipment, high-speed State provided imaging equipment, multiple interfaces with justice partners, e-filing, text reminders, online juror qualification, online juror postponement, online juror exit surveys, family webcasts on the website, esignature, and epayment are a few technologies that have been integrated into the Court system to create efficiencies in court operations and service delivery while enhancing overall customer service. Technology enhancements to the CCAP case management system have allowed for in-court processing of cases and production of court notices and disposition of traffic cases. Each new CCAP software release results in technology driven improvements in the management of our court business. The introduction of a Judicial Dashboard for court officials delivers key tools and statistical data at their fingertips to assist in the efficient delivery of their duties. Traffic and small claims courts are completely paperless and real time imaging has been integrated into each Court division and projects are underway to scan closed files to address long-term storage requirements.

Court Business Process Management – A number of CCAP interfaces between the County, CCAP and a variety of justice partners such as Department of Corrections, Department of Justice, District Attorney, Department of Revenue, Department of Workforce Development, Department of Transportation, Sheriff Department, State Patrol and more have created dramatic changes in how court business is conducted. These interfaces reduce the volume of information that must be manually keyed into the CCAP system and distributed throughout the system. Future initiatives such as a law enforcement warrant interface, a temporary restraining order interface, and a circuit court/appellate court interface will enhance efficiency and improve accuracy.

Assistance to Self-Represented Litigants – Due to ongoing budget pressures, Waukesha County Circuit Courts have integrated the services once provided to self-represented family litigants through a stand-alone Family Self Help Center into the daily work of the Family Division staff. A Family Pro Bono Legal Clinic continues to operate and 13 family webcasts have been created and posted on the website to assist self-represented litigants through procedures and forms necessary to accomplish their family related legal issues. A similar legal clinic is under development to assist self-represented litigants through juvenile guardianship matters. Enhancements to the Court's website address the needs of self-represented litigants by providing forms, procedures, and information on divisional web pages.

Funding of Courts – At the local level, Court funding continues to be a primary challenge. The goal to hold the line on property taxes continues to be a priority of the County. Counties continue to struggle with the issue of state versus county funding concerns and the County's support of the court system has increased to

59%, up from 52% just five years ago. To further exasperate the state funding cuts, case filings and other clerk fees are down significantly in traffic, civil and small claims. The challenge to the department is great, as court needs increase due to societal demands at the same time as pressures rise to decrease costs. Investments in technology and efforts to be more efficient will remain a high priority allowing us to strategically reduce the workforce to address growing fiscal constraints. An investment in workforce training and development to create an innovative and adaptive culture that continuously challenges its people and processes to improve is a priority. Collaboration with the Legislative and Executive branches to address state funding is also a priority.

Courthouse Security – The Courts and the Sheriff’s Department have taken steps to formalize the security training for all Judges, Commissioners, in-court staff, and the circuit court offices. Justice partners will be added to the training in 2014. The County has also invested in additional security glass in the Civil Division to satisfy the separation of the public and staff within the divisional offices. The County Security and Facilities Committee has been active in promoting and supporting these activities and continues to meet quarterly to stay on top of emerging security issues. The County completed construction of a secure corridor to transport inmates from the Jail to the Courts again addressing the separation of in-custody defendants from staff and the public. The Courts will continue to collaborate with the Executive Branch to implement parameter screening at the Juvenile Court Center.

Problem Solving Courts – The mission of the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) is to enhance public safety in Waukesha County through community collaboration by ensuring offender accountability, providing rehabilitation programs and supporting the rights and needs of victims. In response in part to jail overcrowding issues and the serious community problem of OWI as it relates to repeat drunk drivers, and what appears to have become an opiate and heroin epidemic in the State, Waukesha County operates an Alcohol Treatment Court for Waukesha County residents who are cited for third or fourth offense drunk driving, and a Drug Treatment Court to address criminal defendants who present with severe drug addiction issues. These four-phase programs require routine team staffing, frequent interaction with the treatment court judges and case manager, intensive supervision and treatment, random drug and alcohol testing, with both rewards and sanctions. The challenge facing the county and the courts is determining the success of each program and decisions on continuation once federal grants ends.

Justice System Collaboration – Waukesha County operates a Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) consisting of key leaders in the county and the local justice system. Court representatives include the Deputy Chief Judge and Clerk of Circuit Court – other members include the County Executive, County Board Chairman, District Attorney, Sheriff, Director of Human Services, President of the Police Chief’s Association, Probation and Parole, Public Defender’s office, and the Mayor of the City of Waukesha. This collaboration is essential to managing the criminal justice system as efficiently as possible, providing a conduit for identifying pinch points in the system, and developing and testing new programs and initiatives to manage jail and Huber populations. In addition to the Council, court supervisors participate on CJCC subcommittees to ensure the Court’s perspective is considered along with other justice partners. For the CJCC to be successful in achieving its mission, the Courts must continue to be actively involved in CJCC activities.

Customer Responsiveness and Communication – Responsiveness and good communication are essential to the functioning of the Court system – both internally and externally. Circuit Court Services has implemented a number of initiatives to address these needs and performs follow-up activities to ensure our goals are being met. A court kiosk in the courthouse lobby assists the public in finding the location of their court hearing. A video visitation unit was placed in a conference room to allow attorneys to conference with an in-custody defendant from the courthouse. Online tools such as epayment, efilings, surveys, jury qualification questionnaires, webcasts, forms, procedures, and other tools have been rolled out to deliver

services to the public in a convenient and efficient manner. The website has forms, procedures, information, and resource links that relate to each court division to assist the public. The Deputy Chief Judge and other court officials, the Clerk of Circuit Court, and court managers appear at and participate in a variety of County Board committee meetings, CJCC meetings, and state and county committees. Their appearances provide a pipeline for information to and from the other branches of government and the Supreme Court. These are on-going needs that require us to be proactive in ensuring that we are responsive and maintain ongoing communications.

Waukesha County Strategic Outcomes and Court Performance Standards

The preceding background information serves as part of the foundation for building on our current strategic objectives. National Court Performance Standards developed through the US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Center for State Courts along with the current Strategic Outcomes established by the County Executive serve as the remaining foundation of the Circuit Court Services' Plan.

Those selected Court Performance Standards are based upon five critical issues and performance areas that represent the basic outcomes or requirements of any court system. These standards include:

- “Access to Justice – Trial courts should be open and accessible. Location, physical structure, procedures, and the responsiveness of personnel affect accessibility. Barriers can be geographic, economic, and procedural. They can be caused by deficiencies in both language and knowledge of individual participating in court proceedings. Additionally, psychological barriers can be created by mysterious, remote, unduly complicated, and intimidating court procedures.
 - **Safety, Accessibility, and Convenience** – Court facilities are safe, accessible, and convenient to use.
 - **Courtesy, Responsiveness, and Respect** – Judges and other court personnel are courteous and responsive to public, and accord respect to all with whom they come into contact.
 - **Affordable Cost of Access** – The cost of access to court proceedings and records – whether measured in terms of money, time, or the procedures that must be followed – are reasonable, fair, and affordable.”
- "Expedition and Timeliness - Courts are entrusted with many duties and responsibilities that affect individual and organizations involved with the judicial system, including litigants, jurors, attorneys, witnesses, criminal justice agencies, social service agencies, and members of the public. The repercussions from untimely court actions in any of these involvements can have serious consequences for the persons directly concerned, the court, allied agencies, and the community at large.
 - **Effective Case Processing** - The court establishes and complies with recognized guidelines for timely case processing while, at the same time, keeping current with its incoming caseload.
 - **Compliance with Schedules** - The court disburses funds promptly, provides reports and information according to required schedules, and responds to requests for information and other services on an established schedule that assures their effective use."
- “Equality, Fairness, and Integrity - Trial courts should provide due process and equal protection of the law to all who have business before them, as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and State Constitutions. Equality and fairness demand equal justice under law. These fundamental constitutional principles have

particular significance for groups who may have suffered bias or prejudice based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, color, age, handicap, or political affiliation.

- **Responsibility for Enforcement** - The court takes appropriate responsibility for the enforcement of its orders.
- **Production and Preservation of Records** - Records of all relevant court decisions and actions are accurate and properly preserved."
- "Independence and Accountability - The judiciary must assert and maintain its distinctiveness as a separate branch of government. Within the organizational structure of the judicial branch of government, trial courts must establish their legal and organizational boundaries, monitor and control their operations, and account publicly for their performance. Independence and accountability permit government by law, access to justice, and the timely resolution of disputes with equality, fairness, and integrity; and they engender public trust and confidence. Courts must both control their proper functions and demonstrate respect for the coequal partners in government.
- **Accountability for Public Resources** - The court responsibly seeks, uses, and accounts for its public resources.
- **Public Education** - The court informs the community about its programs."
- "Public Trust and Confidence - A judicial system derives its authority and legitimacy from those it serves. The central question posed by this area is whether court performance - in accordance with standards in areas of access to justice, expeditious and timeliness, equality, fairness, and integrity, and independence and accountability - actually instills public trust and confidence.
- **Expeditious, Fair, and Reliable Court Functions** - The public has trust and confidence that basic court functions are conducted expeditiously and fairly, and that court decisions have integrity."

The seven Strategic Outcomes established by the County Executive are:

- A safe county
- An economically vibrant county
- An environmentally responsible county
- A well-planned county
- A county that assists at-risk citizen
- A county that provides customers with quality programs and services
- A county that provides cost-effective services delivered with competence and skill

Five of these seven strategic outcomes are reflected in the Circuit Court Services Strategic Plan along with eight strategic objectives and countless initiatives to complete that will allow us to achieve the overall strategic outcomes and objectives. In summary, the information highlighted in the department's National, State and Local Environmental Scans, coupled with descriptions of identified Court Performance Standards and the County Executive's Strategic Outcomes became the basis for developing Circuit Court Services strategic objectives for 2014-2016 which are detailed in the addenda attached.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

**A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICES
DELIVERED WITH COMPETENCE AND SKILL**

OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure that Department employees have a training plan established to provide professional development and to learn new ways to deliver services with competence and skill.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Conduct a skills gap analysis to refine and define skills needed now and in the future to be used to design and provide ongoing training and staff development opportunities.	Courts and HR	2015-16
Utilize skills gap analysis to create a formal pre-employment testing process.	Courts and HR	2015
Design annual training program and review opportunities with each staff during their annual performance review.	Courts	2014-16
Develop a process to identify and select an outstanding employee(s) annually to participate in the County's new formal mentorship program.	Courts	2014-16
Enroll employees into the County's Introduction to Supervision, Effective Supervision, Management University, Advanced Management University and Lean Government Certification Programs to promote and support personal and professional growth.	Courts	2014-16
Conduct courtroom clerk Audio/Video testing to determine proficiency and skills gap for Sr. Administrative Specialists.	Courts	2014-16
Continue aggressive cross-training initiatives in all areas and seek out opportunities for shared responsibilities across divisions.	Courts	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through the annual employee survey, ensure that a minimum of 80% of Department staff have answered the following statement affirmatively: "During my annual performance evaluation with my direct supervisor, I discussed my training needs and opportunities for professional development."

	2014	2015	2016
Staff Agreeing with this Statement	80%	85%	90%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

A WELL PLANNED COUNTY

OBJECTIVE 2: Effectively integrate strategic goals and objectives into the annual County budget process, staff goals and performance evaluations.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Post the 2014-16 Courts' Strategic Plan on the Courts' Intranet to allow access to all Court employees.	Admin	2014
Integrate County Strategic Outcomes into the formal evaluation process tying the employees' annual goals to a County stated outcome and to a Courts' stated objective and require, at a minimum, an annual discussion between the Supervisor and employee.	Courts	2014-16
Conduct quarterly review of Strategic Plan objectives and corresponding initiatives with entire management team to assess performance.	Courts	2014-16
Require division heads', managers' and supervisors' annual evaluations and awards be based on their accomplishments of strategic goals.	Courts	2014-16
Integrate the County's strategic outcomes into the Courts' annual budget by linking annual budget goals to a specific County outcome.	Admin	2014-16
Conduct periodic targeted surveys of justice partners and court users to gather focused feedback to help identify issues and trends, determine perceptions about our operations, gain insight into needs, and assess the areas where our organization is succeeding or needs to improve.	Courts	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through the annual employee survey, ensure that a minimum of 80% of Department staff understand how their work and assigned goals directly contribute to the overall success of the County in meeting its key strategic priorities.

	2014	2015	2016
Staff Agreeing with this Statement	80%	80%	80%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

**A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES CUSTOMERS
WITH QUALITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

OBJECTIVE 3: Develop internal strategies to improve communication within and between County Departments.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Enhance internal communication through the Courts' Intranet by posting progress and achievements of strategic initiatives and outcomes.	Courts	2014-16
Encourage all Court divisions to make concerted effort to enhance internal communications (email blasts, frequent web and intranet updates, and quarterly reports) with Court employees and justice partners on changes, challenges, projects, and other activities.	Courts	2014-16
Seek opportunities for consolidation of duties across Court divisions and possible mergers to create operational efficiencies and enhancements to service delivery and customer service.	Courts	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through the annual employee survey, ensure that a minimum of 80% of Department staff have answered the following statement affirmatively: "I agree that information and knowledge are shared openly within my department."

	2014	2015	2016
Staff Agreeing with this Statement	80%	80%	80%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

**A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES CUSTOMERS
WITH QUALITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

OBJECTIVE 4: Facilitate a work environment that rewards and recognizes employees that exemplify Waukesha County Core Values.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Sponsor employee contest to design office posters incorporating the Court's Mission and the County's Mission, Strategic Outcomes and Values.	Courts	2014
Rewrite the Courts' New Employee Orientation to incorporate the County's and Courts' Missions, Objectives, Outcomes, Initiatives and Values.	Courts	2014-15
Strive to recognize Court employees with small rewards throughout the year who have demonstrated their commitment to the County's core values.	Courts	2014-16
Recognize at least one Court employee each quarter to receive an Employee of Distinction award through the County's EOD program.	Courts	2014-16
Utilize the County newsletter and the Court's Intranet to recognize departmental and employee achievements and milestones.	Courts	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through an annual employee survey, ensure that a minimum of 80% of Department staff have answered the following statement affirmatively: "I agree that I can be recognized for extra effort while demonstrating the County Core Values."

	2014	2015	2016
Staff Agreeing with this Statement	80%	80%	80%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

A SAFE COUNTY

OBJECTIVE 5: Ensure that case participants, the general public, and staff are able to conduct their business, attend court proceedings, and perform their work in a safe environment.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Work with the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department and Department of Administration to discuss improvements to the current process of delivering court security.	Admin, WSD, DOA	2014-15
Explore opportunities to provide a more secure work environment for Family Court Services staff.	Admin, FCS, DOA	2014-16
Work with the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department to provide routine security training for all court employees, and justice partner.	Courts, WSD	Annually
Work with the Waukesha County Department of Administration and County Executive to expand perimeter screening or another method of providing security screening to the Juvenile Center.	Admin, JV, DOA, WSD	2014-16
Prepare for future planning for new and renovated facilities by seeking opportunities to learn about, gather information and visit new or renovated court facilities.	Admin	2014-16
Utilize newly installed video equipment to improve efficiencies for the court and multiple justice partners, reduce security threats, create a better court experience for litigants and reduce transport and security personnel expenses.	Courts, Court Officials	2014-16
Coordinate a team of County officials to attend the annual Court Security Conference on a biannual basis at a minimum.	Courts, WSD, DOA	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through surveys, gauge perception of regular users of the Courts, including court employees, attorneys, and case participants to achieve 80% satisfaction that they are able to conduct their business, attend court proceedings and perform their work in a safe environment.

	2014	2015	2016
Responders Agreeing with this Statement	80%	85%	90%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

**A COUNTY THAT PROVIDES CUSTOMERS WITH
QUALITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

OBJECTIVE 6: Create an innovative and adaptive culture that continuously challenges its people and processes to improve.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Enhance the Courts' website to provide a more robust experience for visitors by providing the information they are looking for through self-services tools and web applications while simultaneously reducing staff time dedicate to customer related activities and increasing access to the Courts.	Courts	2014-16
Collaborate with Corporation Counsel and the Child Support Division to implement e-filing of adult civil commitments, paternity, and other child support related actions.	FA, JV, CC-Child Support, CCAP	2014-16
Plan for, train, and integrate the ability to submit annual accounting reports online for Guardianship cases.	PR, BC, CCAP	2014-16
Create and implement policies and procedures for handling trusts under new Wisconsin Trust code, Ch. 701.	PR	2014
Resume work with CCAP and the Waukesha Sheriff's Department to create a warrant interface between CCAP, Spillman and DOJ as soon as Spillman is upgraded to version 6.	Admin, C/T, WSD CCAP,	2014-16
Resume work with CCAP on the existing, non-working, eWisacWis interface.	JV, CCAP, DHHS	2014-16
Reopen talks with the Waukesha Sheriff's Department about the use of video conferencing with inmates.	Admin, WSD	2015
Research and test CCAP enhancements and new tools as they become available to determine the impact on the current service delivery and benefits of upgraded or new tools. Test, train and implement on a case-by-case basis.	Courts, CCAP	2014-16
Overhaul Courts' Internet website to incorporate County look and feel.	Admin, County IT	2014-15
Migrate and update the Courts' Intranet to the County's Ektron content management system.	Courts, County IT	2014-16
Develop a court-wide CCAP annual purging process integrating SCR 72 utilizing CCAP purge tools.	Courts	2014-16
Assess progress of divisional scanning needs and develop annual plans to complete all back scanning projects.	Admin, BC, C/T, PR, JV	2014-16
Research and consider designing and implementing an e-appearance traffic court and explore the possibility of expanding paperless opportunities.	Courts, Court Officials, Justice Partners	2014-16

Continued OBJECTIVE 6: Create an innovative and adaptive culture that continuously challenges its people and processes to improve.

Review Family Court Services operation to identify opportunities for operational change to create efficiencies while making strides toward becoming more financially self-supporting.	FCS, Sup. CC, Judges	2014-15
Work with outside providers to expand the children coping with divorce programs to Limited English Speaking litigants.	Admin, C/T, FCS, Judges	2014
Develop activity and performance standard reports for FCS mediation and family studies to provide mechanism for program analysis.	FCS, Sup. CC	2014
Expand the use of remote interpretation for rare language needs and ASL litigants.	Courts	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Through an online survey of website visitors, ensure that a minimum of 80% are satisfied with the website in obtaining the information they sought to obtain.

	2014	2015	2016
Website Visitors Agreeing with this Statement	80%	85%	90%

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

A WELL PLANNED COUNTY

OBJECTIVE 7: Challenge court and justice system managers and administrators to think beyond day-to-day problems and crises to develop sustaining internal and external solutions to threats and opportunities.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Participate with outside audit firm, Schenck S.C., to evaluate the effectiveness of the internal controls over the financial processes within the various Court divisions, and consider adopting recommendations to ensure secure financial operations.	Courts, County Auditor	2014
Collaborate with DOA-Collections to conduct a review of the collection process of aging receivables.	Admin, BC, DOA-C	2014-16
Review and update the Courts' Business Continuity Plan and provided training to key Court employees.	Courts, Emrgcy Man.	Annually
Develop and utilize reports to track key budget drivers, collection performance, and other non-financial internal business processes to monitor and measure performance.	Admin, BC, DOA-C	2014-16
Work with County Board Staff, County Executive Staff, and local legislatures to propose new or provide input on proposed legislations affecting the Courts' diminishing state funding.	Admin, County Board & Executive	2014-16
Monitor the legislative process and participate as necessary to support or oppose bills. Plan for, train staff and implement legislative changes that affect current processes.	Courts	2014-16
Utilizing Business Center resources, systematically apply payment enforcement procedures in an effort to collect Court ordered financial obligations in all divisions.	Courts	2014-16
Monitor the Jury Program following the transition from a two-step qualification and summoning process to a one-step qualification/summoning process done to create program efficiencies and reduce expense.	Admin	2014
Participate in the planning and transition to Intellitime	Courts	2014
Review the annual rotation model with the Judiciary to propose changes with Legal Clerks to meet ongoing recourse pressures.	Admin, Judges	2014-15
Utilize financial, statistical and environmental data to strategically plan for workforce needs to meet ongoing system and budgetary pressures.	Courts	2014-16
Enhance working relations between Court Administration, the Business Center and the Judiciary to address court wide budgetary issues and financial policies and procedures.	Admin, BC Judges	2014-16

MEASUREMENT: Experience a 10% decline of Guardian ad Litem costs in the Family Divisions each year to reflect efforts by the new Business Center to more effectively manage the deposit process.

<u>2012 Actual</u>	<u>2013 Budgeted</u>	<u>2013 Actual</u>	<u>2014 Budgeted</u>	<u>2014 Targeted</u>	<u>2015 Targeted</u>	<u>2016 Targeted</u>
<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>	<u>FA GAL</u>
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
\$117,013	\$135,000	\$95,780	\$125,000	\$95,000	\$85,500	\$76,950

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

ASSISTANCE TO AT-RISK PERSONS OR GROUPS

OBJECTIVE 8: Collaborate with justice partners to provide assistance, services and programming to members of the public who have limited means and sensitive legal matters.

Specific Initiatives to Achieve Objective and Outcome	Units Involved	Target Dates to Complete
Collaborate with justice partners through the Criminal Justice Collaborating Council to support program development, operations and evaluation.	Courts Judicial Officers, CJCC	2014-16
Continue to participate in pilot program between Juvenile Court, DHHS, and the UW Law Mediation Center Child Permanency Program to increase permanency placement and reduce time in out-of-home placement while reducing overall system costs and court and jury trials in CHIPS, Guardianships, and Termination of Parental Rights cases.	JV, DHHS, UW Law	2014-16
Participate in a pilot program between Juvenile Court, DHHS and the Anu Family Services' Intensive Permanence Program to identify potential physical placement options, create permanent connections and increase networks of supportive adults for our most challenging youth placed in out-of-home care or who are at risk of placement in out-of-home care.	JV, DHHS, Anu Family Services	2014-16

Measurement: Reduce the number of Juvenile court trials in CHIPS, Guardianships, and Termination of Parental Rights cases as a result of successful mediation outcomes.