



THE STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2016

JUNE 9, 2016



Allegan County Strategy Map

To achieve our vision and ensure Allegan County continues to progress and prosper, we **MUST...**

Maintain our
FINANCIAL STABILITY

- Develop and maintain a balanced operational budget
- Maintain reserve funds
- Execute long-term financial planning

Provide valuable and necessary quality services to our
CUSTOMERS

- Deliver affordable and accessible services
- Engage and educate our citizenry
- Collaborate locally and regionally



Continuously improve our
PROCESSES

- Be efficient and cost effective
- Measure and learn from outcomes
- Seek and implement innovative solutions

Vision:
Provide our citizens superior and innovative services, be judicious and efficient in the expenditure of resources and promote a safe, clean and healthy environment in which to live, work and play.

Support a united and
ENGAGED WORKFORCE

- Foster a positive, team-based work environment
- Employ and retain high-performing, quality employees
- Promote safety and wellness

Mission:
The Allegan County Board of Commissioners shall plan, develop and evaluate the necessary policies and resources to ensure our county continues to progress and prosper.

Contact Information

If you have questions regarding content found within this report, please feel free to contact any of the individuals listed below. (All telephone numbers are in the 269 area code unless otherwise noted.)

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Introduction

We are proud to present the 2016 State of Allegan County in which we reflect on accomplishments of the past year and discuss current and future initiatives aligned toward Allegan County's prosperity. This report comes as a result of the County's strategy map (adopted February 9, 2012) that was constructed based on the organizational mission and vision (shown on the cover page). Our goal with this report is to keep the Board of Commissioners, citizens, customers, employees and other stakeholders informed on how Allegan County continuously strives to provide superior and innovative services.

Each project/initiative contained within this report is placed under one of the four strategic areas: Engaged Workforce, Process Improvement, Financial Stability and Customer Service. Each of these four strategic initiatives are interrelated building blocks to the next, which enables us to achieve results. Collectively, these strategic focus areas combined with our organizational mission, vision and values form the foundation of our continuous improvement culture.

Continuous improvement requires a commitment to measuring performance and learning from the results. As such this report includes updated statistical data to demonstrate results. This State of the County report serves as one of the transparent ways in which we measure performance and share results relative to specific projects. Organizationally, we strive to demonstrate the same level of transparency and continuous improvement in our daily processes. In addition to our own measurement of performance and the input we get from our customers, we seek to evaluate programs in a number of different ways.

As the demand for information and the methods of communicating information continues to evolve through the use of technology, organizations are finding better ways to communicate in "real-time". The County, through its continuous improvement strategy continues to look for ways to deliver results to all stakeholders effectively and efficiently in place of, or in addition to, this report. One method was in 2015, the County deployed a customer satisfaction survey. This survey will allow us to see customer feedback in real-time and periodically evaluate our service impact throughout the entire organization. The survey feedback is a great opportunity to celebrate successes, improve processes and fix problems in a timelier manner. We are excited to monitor the results of this new method!

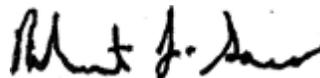
After reading this report, please provide us with your feedback via a short survey at: <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/2016-State-of-the-County>.

We thank Team Allegan County for the unified efforts resulting in the many accomplishments.

Sincerely,



Mark DeYoung
Board Chairman



Robert J. Sarro
County Administrator

United and Engaged Workforce

The first strategic goal, to **Support a United and Engaged Workforce**, is a fundamental building block for Allegan County. We interpret “United” as viewing the County holistically. Each service area does not stand alone—it is part of a bigger entity: the County. “Engaged Workforce” is defined as employees’ willingness and ability to help their organization succeed by giving that extra effort on a continual basis. Understanding these two concepts tells us that without everyone seeing the vision and supporting it with their collective passion, Allegan County will not reach its potential.

To reach Allegan County’s potential, three strategic priorities were developed in 2011 (reviewed annually) and are aimed at supporting a united and engaged workforce. Specific projects or initiatives have been developed to:

- Foster a positive, team-based work environment.
- Employ and retain high-performing, quality employees.
- Promote safety and wellness.

To successfully reach these strategic priorities, accomplishments and initiatives are detailed in the following section.

Lead Contact: Vickie Herzberg, Executive Director of Human Resources – 269.673.0537

Employee Engagement Team

The Employee Engagement Team (EET) listens to and learns from employees. As a result, the EET suggests ideas and changes to the workplace culture which will support leadership in its quest to nurture the total wellbeing and talent of employees. EET initiatives currently include efforts toward team building, recognition, and skill development.

Some of the accomplishments of the team included:

- Sponsored lunch events featuring Lunch & Learns. These events provide employees an opportunity to network with each other while learning healthy habits.
- Sponsored a golf-outing at the Lynx on August 15, 2015, for team building and funding future Employee Engagement events. The event raised \$480 with 7 teams totaling 28 participants.



Also, the EET conducted a comprehensive employee engagement survey. We analyzed the data from the survey and developed a plan around the five areas for improvement that included: being paid competitively with the local market, compensation/pay, base rate of pay, communication between employees and senior management and recognition by management about job performance.

Project Lead: Kristin VanAtter, Employment & Recruitment Specialist - 269.673.0241

Employee Engagement Survey

The Engagement Team developed plans around the five areas for improvement that were outlined in the Engagement Survey from 2014. With help from an outside vendor, we conducted a compensation study to address the top 3 areas for improvement that all revolved around compensation. We are in the process of initiating a communication matrix to address the communication between management and staff. In addition, we are in the process of completing a performance management guide to develop expectations for

employees that will assist managers in providing recognition of job performance.

Project Lead: Kristin VanAtter, Employment & Recruitment Specialist - 269.673.0241

Organizational Training

As a result of the engagement survey conducted in 2014, the County prioritized continuing education of our employees through higher education, certification programs, and professional development as necessary. Particular focus was given to educating employees on the County itself. We provided 9 different types of classes for employees including: DiSC[®] training, Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, Microsoft Office – Power Hour, Coaching Documentation and Discipline, Diversity Awareness Workshop, Conflict Management, Health Care Costs in Retirement, Decision Band Method and County Finances. The total number of employees that took advantage of these opportunities were 133 out of 393 County employees. Many of these individuals participated in more than one training, for a total class participation of 280. This is a great start to training offered to employees and we plan to continue the training throughout 2016.

Project Lead: Kristin VanAtter, Employment & Recruitment Specialist - 269.673.0241

Compensation & Classification Study

The purpose of a compensation and classification study is to ensure that an organization has accurate job specifications and salaries that will help retain the best employees and attract qualified applicants, which is one of Allegan County's key strategic priorities. A key objective for this study is to create a compensation philosophy that is integrated with organizational objectives in order to create synergy and maximize the organization's compensation plans. The last County compensation study was done in 1999.

The goals of this project are:

- Review of current positions and position classifications – Using Job Analysis Questionnaires (JAQ).
- Analysis of the County's competitiveness in the labor market.
- Develop criteria and definitions for organization roles.
- Create competency-based job description templates and deliver completed job descriptions.
- Standardize job titles where appropriate.

The outcome of the study will provide the County an opportunity to focus on planning vs. being reactionary. We will analyze the data to understand our current position in the compensation market for positions and determine how the organization will move forward to establish its future philosophy. We are awaiting the final report from our vendor.

Project Lead: Vickie Herzberg, Executive Director of Human Resources – 269.673.0537

Wellness

The Wellness Team exists to support the continued development and implementation of fully integrated and comprehensive worksite wellness initiatives for Allegan County employees and spouses. This year the Wellness Team focused on the following:

- An incentive program for employees, and promotional efforts that supported an increase in employee participation to our benchmark goal of 75%.
- Established a fitness center located in the Sheriff's Office & Corrections Center.
- Suspended the Fitness Center monthly fee for a trial period of 6 months which resulted in overall increased activity; therefore, management continued to waive the fee for 2016.

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- A 12-month activity calendar that supports the seven dimensions of wellness (Physical, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual, Relational, Environmental and Financial).

The primary objectives of the Wellness Plan are to:

- Maintain sustainable healthcare costs and expenditures.
- Increase health and wellness.
- Increase productivity.
- Increase healthy workplace culture.
- Increase engagement.
- Increase integration across County programs.

Allegan County Wellness Participation (end of year)	2013	2014	2015
Number of Employees in Biometric Assessment, Coaching & Health Survey	80	133	255
Employee Participation Rate (based on matching eligibility)	24%	39%	75%

Project Lead: Amy Doeden, Wellness Coordinator – 269.673.0240

Leadership Conference

The fourth annual leadership conference based on the components of Allegan County’s strategy map was held on October 28, 2015 at the Luella Collins Community Center in Wayland. It has grown over the last four years, with 112 in attendance-the largest to date. The conference provided training and networking opportunities for our leaders and representatives from local municipalities and agencies.

The strategic topic for the conference was “Excellence in Customer Service”. Providing valuable and necessary quality services to our customers is the goal of the County’s organizational strategy. The day included presentations from the following:

- ✓ Ken Wasco, Gordon Foods – Leadership’s impact on customer service
- ✓ Alan Vanderberg, Misty Cunningham, Ottawa County- Customer service initiatives and results
- ✓ Paul Stabile, Perrigo – Assessing Customer Service strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Lt. Governor, Brian Calley - Achieving “Good Government”



With the continued success of the conference, the County will again present the annual leadership conference for 2016.

Project Lead: Brandy Gildea, Parks Coordinator – 269.673.0378

Continuously Improve Our Processes

The County's second strategic goal is to **Continuously Improve our Processes**. Through continuous evaluation and improvement of support processes and service delivery, the organization will increase efficiency and cost effectiveness, maximizing value for citizens.

Three strategic priorities have been developed and are aimed at the continuous improvement of processes:

- Be efficient and cost effective.
- Measure and learn from outcomes.
- Seek and implement innovative solutions.

To meet these strategic priorities, the County engaged in a variety of projects and initiatives, several of which are detailed in the following section.

Lead Contact: Steve Sedore, Executive Director of Operations – 269.673.0470

Continued Web-based Service Development

Each year the Information Services team focuses attention on continuously improving the information, content, and services provided by the Allegan County website. In 2015, the following modifications were made with respect to these efforts:

- Geographic Information Services (GIS) Data Library – Provides freely available Parcel, Contour and other GIS data to the public for download and use
- Clerk's Office website (New Vital Records site)
- Probate Court website (redone with much more content, including online fee calculator)
- Circuit Court Family Division (much more content added)
- Customer Service Survey

- **GoOnline:** [New Dog License Application](#)¹
- Social Media update:
 - ✓ 23% increase in Facebook 'Likes' in past year
 - ✓ Postings in service area announcements are now automatically tweeted to our Twitter account (in addition to Facebook)
 - ✓ New SWMSWC website – (Newly developed Southwest MI Solid Waste Consortium website).

GoOnline: [Allegan County Website](#)²

Project Lead: Deb Jones, Lead Web Developer – 269.673.0470.

Enhanced 911 (e911) Compliance for Businesses & Organizations

When someone dials 9-1-1 from a landline, the address of the phone they are using is displayed on the 911 dispatcher's screen. For residences, this is enough information for emergency responders to reach the area of need. For businesses and organizations, this is difficult based on the size and location of the building(s). As such, new e911 regulations have been drafted requiring businesses of a certain size to be able to identify a location within their facility down to the floor and office where the call originated. This requires special telephone technology to be deployed both within the business and at Central Dispatch. This project was not completed in 2015 and has been moved to the 2016 projects list. Federal mandate requires this compliance be completed by January 1, 2017.

Project Lead: Randy VanAtter, Network Administrator – 269.673.0470

¹cms.allegancounty.org/sites/Office/Treasurer/SitePages/Dogs.aspx
² www.allegancounty.org

9-1-1 Telephone System

In 2015, Allegan County sought and acquired the services of a 911 phone system vendor through the County's RFP process. *Intrado* was chosen and contracted to replace the County's old 9-1-1 phone system with a new NextGen 911 compliant Viper phone system. This system was installed in December 2015 and final system acceptance was given in May 2016.

Project Lead: Jeremy Ludwig, Central Dispatch Director – 269.686.4564

911 Radio System Replacement

In 2015, Allegan County sought and acquired the services of a consultant through the County's RFP process. *ACD Telecom* was chosen and contracted to provide consulting and project management services for the Radio Project. With ACD Telecom's assistance, a needs assessment and eventual RFP to replace the County's current 800 MHz radio system was created. To further assist in this effort, a Project Steering Team was established comprised of stakeholders from fire services, law enforcement, EMS, local and county government, and led by the Central Dispatch Director and County Project Manager. The RFP was approved by the Board of Commissioners in October 2015, and released in January 2016 for bids. In February 2016, a mandatory pre-bid meeting was held with potential vendors and site visits to all of our tower sites and the dispatch center were conducted. Two vendors submitted bids for this project. Vendor selection is anticipated in June 2016.

Project Lead: Jeremy Ludwig, Central Dispatch Director – 269.686.4564

MCT Replacement

In 2008, the computing technology was upgraded in all County law enforcement vehicles from simple data terminals (MDT) to full working laptops (MCT). These MCTs allow

officers to perform a variety of functions in the field without having to rely on Central Dispatch staff to relay that information to them. This saves Dispatch a significant amount of time and allows them to concentrate on other dispatch responsibilities. It also provides officers with firsthand information including relevant photographs and other graphical related information that cannot be provided over a radio.

The existing MCTs in the field have reached their end of life and were scheduled to be replaced by the end of 2015. As of March 28, 2016, MCTs have been deployed to all county Law Enforcement personnel. The decommissioning of the old units is being finalized.

Project Lead: Randy VanAtter, Network Administrator – 269.673.0470

Friend of the Court File Room Conversion

In 2013, the Friend of the Court (FOC) office transitioned from a paper filing system to an electronic filing system. All the FOC paper files were "backscanned" to become electronic. The creation of electronic files emptied the file room in the FOC office and both the Friend of the Court and the Deputy Friend of the Court are working with Facilities Management and Financial Services to change that empty space into individualized office space to expand the FOC service area. This will allow for better, friendlier customer service because specific employees are required to meet with FOC customers on a daily basis. Additionally, this will create a more engaged workforce because the FOC employees will have their own work space in which will allow for increased focus and concentration, as well as increased work production.

Project Lead: Erin Stender, Deputy Friend of the Court – 269-673-0335

Environmental Health SWORD Solution

SWORD is a software program designed for use in Environmental Health (EH). It has been used in Allegan County since 2006 for its Environmental Health's Food Team. The software has been used extensively for the written reports of restaurant inspections. In 2013, it was added to the Environmental Health budget as a capital expenditure for use by the EH Field Team. The Field Team is responsible for issuing permits for new and replacement wells and septic systems for residential and commercial facilities and Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control (SESC). In addition to issuing permits, the Field Team performs monthly inspections of the SESC projects and annual inspections of septic tank pumper trucks, public swimming pools and campgrounds. Residential homes and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) facilities are also evaluated as re-

quested for water supplies and sewage disposal systems. All of these permits, inspections and evaluations can now be performed on tablet computers in the office or the field, and at times can even be emailed directly to the customers. This has increased efficiencies and customer service and decreased turnaround times.

This software also has the capability of tabulating time and activity for Environmental Health. This will aid in the annual review of fees and staffing levels. The program was implemented in February of 2016. Currently, the Field Team has a 21 business day turnaround for applications. In 2015 we met this goal 80% of the time. As the teams get familiar with the program and the efficiency levels continue to increase, we expect to decrease the turnaround time by 20%.

Project Lead: Randy Rapp, Environmental Health Director – 269-686-4506

Maintain Our Financial Stability

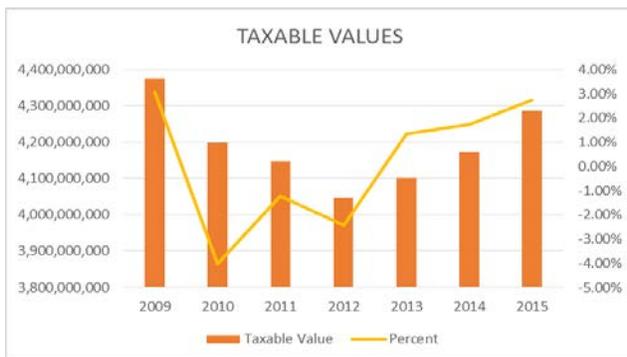
The third strategic goal, to **Maintain our Financial Stability**, is another critical element of the overall vision and mission of the County. Three strategic priorities have been developed and are aimed at maintaining the County’s financial stability:

- Develop and maintain a balanced operational budget.
- Maintain reserve funds.
- Execute long-term financial planning.

To meet these strategic priorities, the County has engaged in various projects and initiatives, several of which are detailed in the following section. Background on the present state of Allegan County finances is also included.

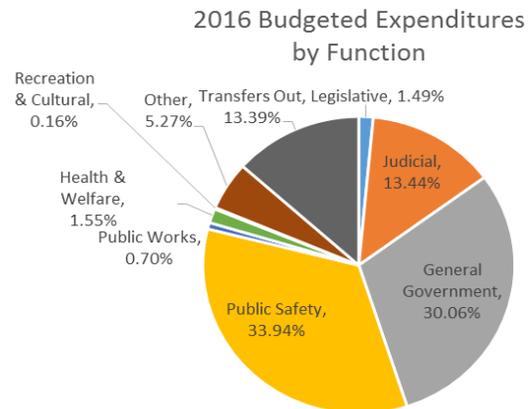
Background

The aggregate market value of real estate property within Allegan County is approximately \$11.8 billion. As shown by the chart below, Allegan County’s Taxable values continue to increase in response to the improving economy. In the previous 3 years the taxable values increased by 1.35% in 2013, 1.74% in 2014, and 2.73% in 2015. It is anticipated that taxable values will increase by 1.8% in 2016.



Allegan County’s Finances remain strong as a result of its continued adherence to several conservative fiscal principles. The County maintains an unreserved General Fund fund balance of 10% of General Fund budgeted expenditures. The County’s budg-

et stabilization fund is maintained at the maximum level allowed by law. The Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund (DTRF), which is used to purchase delinquent taxes from local taxing units within the County, is set at 150% of the current year’s settlement. Allegan County also maintains a considerably low level of debt. The General Fund, Road Commission Fund and Special Revenue Funds have 2016 total operating budgets of \$95,634,940. The General Fund is the chief operating fund of Allegan County government and is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund. Allegan County’s 2016 General Fund operating budget was adopted at \$30,532,247. As shown in the chart below, approximately



60% of the General Fund budgeted expenditures represent either Public Safety (33.94%) or General Government (30.06%).

GoOnline: [A Public Guide to County Finances³](http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/FIN/Dashboard/AC_2014CitizensGuideFinances.pdf)

Lead Contact: Doug Nord, Executive Director of Finance – 269.673.0228

³www.allegancounty.org/docs/FIN/Dashboard/AC_2014CitizensGuideFinances.pdf

Courthouse Square

Planning for the future development of the Courthouse Square began in November 2013, and continues today. Input on the future interior and exterior facility needs has been collected from interested citizens and County employees. A consultant was hired to conduct a study which included defining the 20-year space and facility needs in addition to exploring possible additions, renovations and reconfigurations for the square taking this input into consideration.

As part of the overall Courthouse Square development project, the old Sheriff's Office & Corrections Center on the Courthouse Square was demolished in the fall of 2015 and construction of a new parking lot with sidewalks was completed in the spring of 2016. The old section of the parking lot will receive a fresh seal coat later in 2016 to match the new section of the lot.



In addition, the County and the State of Michigan, along with other stakeholders, have been in discussion about the need for additional space for the State Probation and Parole office currently housed in the Courthouse (a component of the Michigan Department of Corrections). In April 2016, the County Board of Commissioners authorized the County Administrator to initiate the necessary steps to begin constructing an appropriate space within the south-

west area of the new Sheriff's Office & Corrections Center for the State Probation/Parole office. Architectural design work will begin in 2016 with construction concluding in 2017.

Project Lead: Dan Wedge, Executive Director of Services – 269.686.4529

Economic Development

The purpose of the Allegan County Economic Development Commission (EDC) is to take a higher-level view of the County's economic development program and offer guidance and leadership to the County in addressing stakeholder needs.

Since the fall of 2013, Allegan County has contracted with the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency (AAESA) to provide economic development services, which established a new Director of Economic Development for Allegan County. Business attraction and expansion were areas of focus this past year, with over \$20 million in additional investment projected. The *Perrigo Pride* Campaign highlighted an important effort for business retention with the county's largest employer, Perrigo. Also, the EDC assisted with bringing \$395,000 in customized training dollars into Allegan County, directly benefiting 14 employers. These funds were used to train 291 employees and created 43 new jobs.

Current EDC projects include:

- The Great Lakes Ag-Tech Incubator – A partnership with Ottawa Co. to assist agriculture entrepreneurs launch new businesses/products. Private investment is being sought to match the County commitment to the project.
- Allegan Area Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Partnership – Connecting employers and educators to create a county-wide system involving STEM-related activities that lead to high-demand, high-wage employment.

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Three work teams are established focusing on skills attainment, career exploration and apprenticeship.

- Haworth-Douglas site – Attraction project for re-development of a large industrial site, with the potential for 75+ jobs. Working with a developer, the City of Douglas and state government for site rehabilitation and readiness.

Looking ahead, the members of the EDC have begun securing key private investment partnerships to move forward with the expansion of economic development services and to establish Allegan County Economic Development as a recognized brand within the community.

GoOnline: [Allegan County Economic Development Commission](#)⁴

Project Lead: Nora Balgoyen-Williams, Director of Economic Development –
269.686.5311

⁴ www.allegancountyedc.org/

Provide Valuable and Necessary Quality Services

The final strategic goal is to **Provide Valuable and Necessary Quality Services to our Customers.**

The demand for human services continues to increase even as funding falls behind. With a focus on customer service and meeting the needs of citizens, Allegan County continues to find ways to make services more readily available.

Three strategic priorities have been developed and are aimed at providing valuable and necessary quality services to the County’s customers:

- Deliver affordable and accessible services.
- Engage and educate our citizenry.
- Collaborate locally and regionally.

A few selected projects and initiatives centered on these priorities are detailed in the following section.

Lead Contact: Dan Wedge, Executive Director of Services - 269.686.4529

Senior and Veteran Services

Senior Services, along with the Commission on Aging, is committed to evaluating each service as the current contract comes to a close, in an effort to identify areas that would add value and/or create efficiencies in the service. In 2015, the focus was on Home Delivered Meals (HDM). The previous contract was for the entire service delivery with the caterer located in Benton Harbor, MI. It was decided to develop two contracts for this service; one for the meal preparation and one for the meal delivery. After an extensive evaluation process, contracts were awarded to Can-teen Services for the meal preparation and Community Action of Allegan County for the delivery of the meals. Beginning January 4, 2016, the meals are now prepared at the Allegan County Sheriff’s Office & Corrections Center. The reduction in the amount of time



between preparation and delivery to the client has increased the quality and freshness of the food.

See what HDM Clients have to say about the new services:

Donna of Shelbyville likes the variety of meals. She likes the chicken pot pie and that there is

more white meat.

Linda of Wayland says, “I like the variety of meals, thumbs up on meals!”

Senior Services Service Levels	2013	2014	2015 Jan - Mar
Home-Delivered Meals served	47,722	59,005	13,566
Adult Day Care hours	13,060	12,875	3,081
In-Home Support hours	27,237	32,678	8,731
Transportation (miles)	137,581	199,016	44,692
PERS (units)	36	109	111

Veteran Services, in partnership with the Veterans Administration, hosted its third Annual Homeless Veteran Stand Down in August 2015 where 62 veterans received assistance. The team now has four accredited Veteran Service Counselors on staff to assist Veterans with emergency assistance and claims preparation.

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Veteran Services Service Levels	2013	2014	2015*
Forms filed with the Veterans Administration	643	686	649
Veterans Trust Fund Applications filed	27	17	15
Veterans Relief Fund Applications filed	66	70	65
Veterans seen in the office	795	715	642
Burials	6	16	4
West Michigan Veterans Assistance Program	NA	9	17

*New staff were not accredited until August 2015, so fewer veterans were seen.

Project Lead: Sherry Owens, Director of Senior & Veterans Services – 269.673.3333

Customer Service Team

The Customer Service Team formed in June 2015. The team consists of eight representatives from service areas throughout the organization. The first objective for the Customer Service Team was to develop a customer satisfaction survey for the entire organization.

The survey consists of four common core questions; additionally the customer may choose a service area to answer additional questions that are specific to that service area. The purpose of this survey is to gauge the satisfaction level of our customers. Survey feedback gives us the opportunity to celebrate our successes, improve our processes and fix problems. The link to the survey is found on the bottom of the Allegan County webpages.

In 2016, the team plans to work on the following objectives:

- Monitor and refine the new Customer Satisfaction Survey.
- Develop an organizational culture that supports excellence in customer service by providing guidance in setting service level expectations.
- Partner with the engagement team to offer organizational training that supports ex-

cellent service delivery and customer satisfaction.

“I am very pleased with the work from the Customer Services Team. The team formed in 2015 and represents several county service areas. They successfully completed the first objective to develop a customer satisfaction survey for the entire organization. This survey will provide helpful information to drive good customer service.” – Dan Wedge, Executive Director of Services

Project Lead: Brandy Gildea, Parks Coordinator – 269.673.0378

Specialized Enforcement Officer

The Friend of the Court (FOC) along with the Deputy FOC recognized a need within the FOC caseload to provide individualized services to payers of child support who require continued intervention by the Friend of the Court office. The new Specialized Enforcement Officer position will set up processes and services for customers requiring specific monitoring because of consistent non-payment and various levels of enforcement involvement such as FOC probation in accordance with MCL 552.635a and MCL 552.633 (2)(h). This position will deal with specific areas of enforcement including medical support, interstate cases, discharge or arrears, and various other complex case management tools. This new position was approved by the County Board in March 2016 and replaces the previous Medical Enforcement Officer position in the FOC office.

Project Lead: Erin Stender, Deputy Friend of the Court – 269.673.0335

Walker Drain Project

The Allegan County Drain office received a petition from Ganges Township regarding a washout and erosion along the banks of Lake Michigan within the Walker Drain Drainage district. The project required collaboration

with property owners, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Allegan County Drain office. The project received the 2016 Innovation & Excellence Award from the Michigan Association of Drain Commissioners.

“The Walker Drain project is a newly established drain that had many physical and financial challenges due to the size of the District and the condition of the drain. It started out as steep, unstable, dangerously eroded banks that for years caused torrents of unfiltered water and tons of sediment to flow directly into Lake Michigan. It is now a picturesque, wonderful ravine that is beautiful and that residents are proud to show off. I am very proud of the Walker Drain Project.” – Denise Medemar, Drain Commissioner



(Above: Constructed ravine looking back up towards Walker Road on the beach outfall to Lake Michigan)

GoOnline: [Walker Drain Project Article](#)⁵

Project Lead: Denise Medemar, Drain Commissioner – 269.673.0440

Animal Shelter

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance continues to be a strong partner with the Health Department in overseeing shelter operations. They operate a vibrant animal adoption shelter, adopt-

ing out more animals than are euthanized. Staff and volunteer enhancements have improved both the health and treatment of the animals.

Animal Shelter Service Levels	2015
Cats Taken In	403
Cats Adopted	262
Cats Transferred	139
Cats Euthanized	39
Cats Returned to Owner	4
Dogs Taken In	740
Dogs Adopted	376
Dogs Transferred	93
Dogs Euthanized	61
Dogs Returned to Owner	212

Animals adopted are current on vaccinations, spayed or neutered and micro-chipped. Donations to the animal shelter have increased and public support to volunteer and adopt has increased. The Animal Shelter is a bright spot in the County for care and re-homing of lost pets.

Project Lead: Randy Rapp, Environmental Health Director – 269.686.4506

Dog Licensing Technology

On November 1, 2015, Allegan County Treasurer Sally Brooks implemented a new web-based dog licensing program that significantly improves customer service and accessibility without increasing the cost of dog licenses. The new program allows for year-round licensing, with license renewals corresponding to rabies vaccination expiration dates. Historically, dog licenses could only be obtained directly from the County Treasurer’s Office, but now Allegan County residents can purchase or renew dog licenses online via the County Treasurer’s website, by mail, or in person at the County Treasurer’s Office, or at participating veterinarians and local units of government that have agreed to offer this additional service.

⁵ www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

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Project Lead: Jennifer Morris, Deputy Treasurer/Tax Supervisor – 269.673.0269

Community Health Needs Assessment

In 2015, the Community Health Improvement Plan was created. This cyclic process will occur again in 2017 to reassess community health needs and development of an improvement plan to meet those needs. Allegan County Public Health will continue to be a key partner in working collaboratively with all sectors to maximize resources while improving health outcomes in Allegan County. *Together: striving for a healthier Allegan County.*

GoOnline: [Community Health Needs Assessment](#)⁶

Project Lead: Angelique Joynes, MPH, RN, Health Officer – 269.686.4535

Allegan County Legal Assistance Center

The Allegan County Legal Assistance Center [ACLAC] provides and supports committed volunteers to educate litigants with the appropriate legal processes and procedures, offering proper tools and assistance with paperwork, thereby, more efficiently accomplishing justice for all. Located in the lower level of the Courthouse, the ACLAC has expanded its hours, and will now also be open on Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in addition to Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ACLAC has assisted over 5,400 patrons since its inception.

ACLAC welcomes individuals who have civil court cases and are self-representing. Volunteers and staff cannot provide legal advice or represent anyone in court. They may explain a person's legal options but will not tell them what to do.

ACLAC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded, in part, through a pilot-program grant from the Michigan State Bar Foundation and supported by an Allegan County Community Foundation grant, the United Way, the Mignon Sherwood DeLano Foundation, private donations, and monies raised through various fundraising efforts.

Year	Patrons Served
2015	2,152
2014	1,816
2013	1,254
2012	261
Total Since Inception	5,483

“The Allegan County Legal Assistance Center provides self-represented litigants with access to justice, providing them assistance in court procedures, forms and legal resources. In less than 4 years, ACLAC has served over 5000 people, resulting in increased public service for the citizens of Allegan County. I am grateful for the volunteers, members of the Board of Directors and the community for their commitment and support of this outstanding organization.” –Margaret Zuzich Bakker, Chief 48th Circuit Court Judge

GoOnline: [Allegan County Legal Assistance Center](#)⁷

Project Lead: Chris Jokinen, Navigator/Coordinator – 269.686.5221

Drug Treatment Court

Currently in its 5th year in Allegan County, the Drug Treatment Court (DTC) is a specialty court that has a specially designed docket, the purpose of which is to achieve a reduction in recidivism and substance abuse among non-violent offenders and to increase their likelihood of achieving a drug-free, productive life. DTC utilizes early, continuous and intensive judicially supervised treatment,

⁶ www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

⁷ www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

mandatory periodic drug and alcohol testing, community supervision and the use of appropriate sanctions, incentives and rehabilitation services to achieve this goal.

The program is appropriate for cases where the sentencing guidelines are “straddled cell” (judge has some discretion in sentencing since the guidelines straddle local incarceration or state prison). The DTC continues to review applications to make sure that community safety concerns are addressed.

The drug court’s first participant was admitted on June 30, 2011. Since then, six (6) additional participants were admitted in 2011, three (3) in 2012, thirteen (13) in 2013, seven (7) in 2014 and six (6) in 2015 totaling thirty (36) participants since inception.

In 2015, twelve participants were discharged from the program – seven (7) successfully and five (5) unsuccessfully, due to new offenses or non-compliance. This brings the cumulative total over the past five years to sixteen (16) participants successfully completing the drug court, two (2) have transferred to another drug court jurisdiction and nine (9) participants were unsuccessful and removed from the program. There are currently nine (9) active participants.

Project Lead: Judge William Baillargeon, 57th District Court – 269.673.0490

Mental Health Treatment Court

In 2009, the 57th District Court, led by Judge Skocelas, teamed with representatives of Allegan County Community Mental Health, the Allegan County Prosecutor’s Office, local defense attorneys, and a substance abuse treatment provider, Ottagan Addictions Recovery (OAR) to create a Mental Health Treatment Court. This treatment court is currently funded with grant monies awarded by the Michigan State Court Administrators Office.

Mental Health Treatment Court is a two-phase program designed for adult offenders charged with one or more criminal offenses

who are having difficulty with mental health issues, are developmentally disabled, or are mentally ill with co-occurring disorders (mental health/substance abuse). The program involves frequent court appearances and active participation by the defendant towards their recovery. It also includes frequent random drug and alcohol screens. The court provides incentives for progress and sanctions for negative behaviors. If the participant fails to follow certain rules, they may be required to report more often to the Court, to spend time in jail, or to face termination from the Mental Health Treatment Court. This court is voluntary; the defendant must consent to participation before he/she can be placed into the court program. The statewide mental health courts share the objective of preventing the jailing of the mentally ill and/or of securing their release from jail to appropriate services and support in the community. In addition, each court gives a high priority to concerns for public safety when arranging for the care of mentally ill offenders.

Since its inception, 288 defendants have been referred to the program. Of those 288, 164 were rejected and 124 were accepted. Of the 124 who were accepted, 67 have successfully graduated, and 14 are currently in the program – 8 in Phase I and 6 in Phase II. Forty-three (43) were discharged from the program after acceptance – 37 for cause and 6 for other reasons. The program accepts both felony and misdemeanor cases.

Of the 14 current participants, 11 have misdemeanor charges and 3 participants have felony charges. Twelve participants graduated from the program in 2015.

Project Lead: Judge Joseph Skocelas, 57th District Court – 269.673.0490

Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program

The Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program (SSSPP) is currently in its 4th year with

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the Allegan County Circuit Court. It is an intensive probation supervision program that targets high-risk felony offenders with a history of probation violations or failures. Many of the probationers have been unemployed for years, have long-term drug and alcohol addictions, and mental health problems. SSSPP participants are closely monitored, including frequent random testing for drug and alcohol use, and are required to meet regularly with probation and/or case management staff. SSSPP aims to improve probationer success by promptly imposing graduated sanctions, including small amounts of jail time for probation violations. SSSPP is modeled on Hawaii's HOPE program, which has proven to be very effective in improving the rate of successful completion of probation among high-risk probationers.

Since the program's inception, there have been 21 successful graduates. The program currently has 24 total clients, 20 of whom are currently employed. SSSPP has partnered with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) to offer additional services to help promote a law abiding lifestyle. Counseling, outpatient and residential treatment are some of the services available within the program. SSSPP has recently hired an irregular part-time employee to conduct random drug screens, which has increased the efficiency of testing.

GoOnline: [Hawaii's HOPE Program](http://hopehawaii.net/)⁸

Project Lead: Melonie Swisher, Coordinator – 269.686.5205

Veterans Treatment Court

The West Michigan Regional Veterans' Treatment Court (WMRVTC) is the first Regional Veterans' Treatment Court in Michigan. It serves military veterans from Allegan, Van Buren and Ottawa Counties and receives case transfers from several other counties. The court uses drug court and mental health

treatment court principles to treat veterans. WMRVTC promotes sobriety, recovery and stability through a coordinated response that involves the collaboration of the traditional partners found in drug and mental health courts as well as the Veterans Health Administration, Veterans Benefit Administration, veteran employment representatives, veteran's service organizations, volunteer mentors and others. It is funded through a grant from the State Court Administrator's Office.

The court began in 2014, so it is now in its second full year.

The court currently has 19 veterans participating with new applicants being reviewed by the team for admission as they arise. Of those 19 participants, 4 are from Van Buren County, 1 from Barry, 2 from Kalamazoo, 1 from Ionia, 1 from Ottawa, 1 from Hillsdale and 9 from Allegan. The court had its first graduate in August of 2015.

Project Lead: Judge William Baillargeon, 57th District Court – 269.673.0490

Truancy Direct Referral Diversion Program

During the last school year, the Family Court expanded its truancy diversion program to Fennville and Plainwell school districts and continued to provide the program to Allegan Public Schools. This year, the court received 50 referrals for students who are at risk of becoming truant. Of those 50 referrals, 43 meetings have been held with parents, school officials and court staff to attempt to identify barriers to school attendance and to make necessary referrals for services intended to eliminate those barriers. There are 7 cases where meetings are still pending. As of March 2016, only 11 of those 50 cases went to the formal court docket, and 7 of those students did so well, they qualified for performance incentives.

The truancy diversion program has been well-received by all three school districts,

⁸ <http://hopehawaii.net/>

with the most positive benefit being easier access to the court system for students who are at risk for truancy, which in turn, provides for earlier intervention before attendance issues spiral out of control. Plainwell truancy officers report that the program has been well received by the community at large. Additionally, the program continues to facili-

tate communication between the court and schools, provides education to school officials regarding court processes, and provides a more efficient, hands-on approach to truancy cases.

Project Lead: Jolene Clearwater, Director of Family Court Probation/Attorney Referee – 269.673.0516

2015 Closed Projects

Completed projects or initiatives highlighted in previous State of the County reports are included here for quick reference. Some of these initiatives i.e. project management, safety and lean concepts are part of our organizational strategy to deliver excellent services. Please keep in mind these may reappear in future reports as progress develops.

Budget Policy

The purpose of the Budget Policy is to require that Allegan County adopt a balanced budget, establish responsibilities and define the procedure for the preparation, adoption and maintenance of the budget. Allegan County reviewed and amended its comprehensive budget policy in February 2016. This budget policy enhances the County's ability to make informed, transparent decisions regarding the type and level of services we provide to our citizens. The 2017 budget process will build on the previous year's five-year operational budget. In addition, the County continues to develop its long-term, 15-year budget for capital projects to include buildings, upgrades and replacement of equipment. Together, the County's 5-year operational budget and 15-year capital budget will lead to improved operational and long-term budget planning.

Project Lead: Doug Nord, Executive Director of Finance – 269.673.0228

Unfunded Actuarial Liability (UAL)

Allegan County presently has an Unfunded Actuarial Liability (UAL) in the defined benefit pension plan of approximately \$19 million. For more than a decade the County has taken action to reduce the growth of its UAL going forward.

Pursuant to the provisions of Michigan Public Act 34 of 2001, in December 2014, Allegan County issued Pension Obligation Bonds in the amount of \$15,060,000. The Pension Bonds effectively funded the County's previously Unfunded Actuarial Liability (UAL) of its defined benefit plan on a permanent basis. The County is estimated to save \$11 million

over the course of the bond. The County is likely to experience additional savings by paying off the debt early.

Project Lead: Robert J. Sarro, County Administrator – 269.673.0239

Contract Management

Newly formed in 2015, the Contract Management Team began meeting monthly with the purpose of collaborating to organize, track and manage past, current and future contracts. A main focus of the team is on streamlining the contracting process and maintaining organizational awareness of the full contract picture.

Project Lead: Valdis Kalnins, Project Manager – 269.673.0518

Online Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Library

Although the County charges for providing access to the GIS data and products developed by the County under the State of Michigan's Enhanced Access to Public Records Act, there has been a strong argument that this data should be available at no cost, given demonstrated benefits to communities from having access to it, and considering taxpayer funds have been used to develop it. In recent years, advances in technology have eliminated the challenge of providing access to the GIS data without significant effort and free GIS viewers have been developed to allow the public to access and use the data with limited self-directed training. With both of these barriers overcome, in 2014 the County Board of Commissioners established an online GIS Da-

ta Library and eliminated fees charged for GIS data.

GoOnline: [GIS Data Library Hyperlink](#)⁹

Project Lead: Neil Besteman, GIS Manager – 269.673.0470

New Plat Book

The Information Services Team updated the 2007 County Plat Book and published a new edition in 2015. The new edition includes various enhancements including a street index for each township map, additional inset maps for cities and other populated areas, detailed maps of each county park, and other useful maps for tourism and recreation. The cost of a Plat Book has been reduced from \$40.00 to \$20.00 and is available at the front counter of the Register of Deeds, Equalization, or the Parks and Recreation offices. They may also be ordered over the phone by calling the Parks and Recreation office at 269.686.9088. Finally, individual map pages have been posted in PDF format to the county website for free viewing and download. The County has sold about 250 plat books since publication.

GoOnline: [2015 Plat Book Edition](#)¹⁰

Project Lead: Neil Besteman, GIS Manager– 269.673.0470

Probate Court

The Allegan County Probate Court has been known for consistently providing efficient and friendly assistance to its customers. Recently, customers rated the Probate Court at 93% to 100% in response to questions asking them whether they were able to get their business done within a reasonable amount of time, whether they were treated with respect by probate staff and the Judge, and whether their cases were adjudicated fairly. Despite these high numbers, the Probate Court has

worked to continue improving its customer satisfaction. The Court recently added new professional qualifications to the Probate Register/Administrator position, to increase the quality of assistance provided to the public, and is working to cross train referees from other departments to create a more unified, efficient, and leaner court system.

Project Lead: Judge Michael Buck, Probate Court – 269.673.0250

Resource Expo

In September of 2015, the Administrative Leadership Team entered a booth at the Allegan County Fair to raise awareness of the services available to the residents of Allegan County. The booth featured the key service areas throughout the County, such as the Health Department, Parks, Senior and Veteran Services, Allegan County Transportation, Central Dispatch and the Board of Commissioners. Brochures and information for each of the participating service areas was available at the booth throughout the week. The booth placed 10th out of 13 booths in the contest. The prize money (\$80) was donated to the Employee Engagement Team for employee functions throughout the year.



Project Lead: Sherry Owens, Director of Senior & Veterans Services – 269.673.3333

⁹ www.allegancounty.org/services/GIS

¹⁰ www.allegancounty.org/services/GIS/SitePages/Platbook.aspx

State Recognition/Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planning

In 2014, Allegan County Health Department (ACHD) Emergency Preparedness Division earned national and state recognition for their Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) certification. To earn this certification, ACHD met over 100 national standards and other best practices. PPHR certification recognized health departments that are fully integrated into the response community and prepared to respond to any emergency.

The PPHR is linked to the Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) national accreditation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) cooperative agreement. Since the Allegan County Health Department is PPHR certified, ACHD will use this documentation to fulfill applicable requirements when applying in the future for PHAB national accreditation.

The PPHR national certification aligns with Allegan County's Strategic Map in the area of continuous quality improvement. The PPHR national full certification is in place for five years. In 2019, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Division will resubmit their emergency preparedness operational plans for re-certification.

Project Lead: Kathy Yonkers-Wright, RDH, MS, CAGS – 269-290-8949

West Side Park Improvements

In 2015, the County completed the \$400,000 West Side Park improvement project with \$300,000 from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant received from the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Improvements included:

- A new 32 space parking lot located closer to the bluff/beach.

- A new walkway leading from the parking lot to the top of the bluff which also connects to existing park trails.
- Replacement of the existing stairs and the addition of a viewing deck half way down.



- An accessible ramp for users with disabilities to get from the top of the bluff to the viewing deck and continuing down to the beach area where it connects to an accessible seasonal walkway that traverses the water's edge.
- Bluff work included adding a gazebo, retaining walls, railings, fencing and new benches.
- Replacement of a south pavilion concrete slab to make it accessible and installation of a serving area (new grills & serving table).



- An accessible pathway that connects the south pavilion to existing walkways.
- Screen fence and landscaping restoration as well as storm sewer improvements for the developed area.

Project Lead: Brandy Gildea, Parks Coordinator – 269.673.0378

Conclusion

We hope you enjoyed reading the 2016 State of the County. Reflecting on the report, each project/initiative was placed under one of the four strategic areas: Engaged Workforce, Process Improvement, Financial Stability and Customer Service. However, each strategic initiative is an interrelated building block to the next, enabling us to achieve results. These results are possible in all focus areas through the continuous improvement model obtained by having expectations of excellent communication, accountability, transparency, and feedback.

Through each initiative, we find ways to improve processes and services aimed at providing a better experience for our employees, citizens and customers. As a continuous improvement effort, your feedback is important to us. Please complete a short survey at <http://sgiz.mobi/s3/2016-State-of-the-County>.

Appendix A

GENERAL FUND	# Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTE's)	2016 Budget
Fund Balance	N/A	\$3,530,598.00
Board of Commissioners/Legal	7	\$454,298.00
Courts	45.5	\$4,104,035.00
Administration	2.5	\$350,089.00
Elections	0	\$177,639.00
Financial Services	4.5	\$388,911.00
Clerk	9.5	\$605,386.00
Equalization	6	\$457,711.00
Human Resources	4.5	\$414,578.00
Prosecuting Attorney	13.5	\$1,279,590.00
Register of Deeds	4	\$302,947.00
Treasurer	6	\$508,790.00
Cooperative Extension	0	\$88,357.00
Network Systems/Telephone/Land Information Services/Records	13	\$1,656,546.00
Facilities Management	11	\$2,658,020.00
Drain Commissioner	4	\$366,922.00
Sheriff's Department	100	\$10,040,104.00
Emergency Management	1	\$110,440.00
Plat Board	0	\$157.00
Local Emergency Planning Committee	0	\$30,895.00
Animal Shelter	1	\$101,943.00
Livestock Claims	0	\$2,050.00
Department of Public Works	0	\$13,270.00
Drains - Public Benefit	0	\$106,954.00
Monumentation Program	0	\$95,000.00
Substance Abuse	0	\$188,845.00
Communicable Diseases	0	\$7,500.00
Medical Examiner	0	\$184,099.00
Veterans Services	0	\$91,952.00
Brownfield - Hazardous Substance	0	\$50,000.00
Other Fringe Benefits/Insurance/Contingencies	0	\$1,608,270.00
Transfers Out	0	\$4,086,949.00
TOTAL GENERAL FUND		\$34,062,845.00
ROAD COMMISSION FUND	50	\$18,711,200.00

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SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS:	# FTE's	2016 Budget
Parks/Recreation	2	\$319,787.00
Central Dispatch / E911/CIP	23	\$10,471,871.00
Friend of the Court	0	\$304,657.00
Friend of The Court Office	18	\$1,318,742.00
Health	24	\$3,478,747.00
Transportation Grant	2.5	\$2,412,083.00
Multi Agency Collaborative	0	\$17,423.00
Public Improvement Fund	0	\$4,540,839.00
CIP Building Capital	0	\$1,810,104.00
Youth Home CIP	0	\$356,009.00
Local Revenue Sharing	0	\$428,011.00
Annual Projects	0	\$967,780.00
MIFPI Community Team	0	\$180,204.00
Register of Deeds Automation Fund	0	\$801,922.00
Budget Stabilization Fund	0	\$4,459,099.00
Sick and Vacation Liability	0	\$517,323.00
Palisades Emergency Planning	0	\$52,073.00
Concealed Pistol Licensing Fund	0	\$0.00
Local Corrections Officers Training Fund	0	\$122,820.00
Drug Law Enforcement Fund – Sheriff/Prosecutor & D.A.R.E.	0	\$222,937.00
Justice Training Fund	0	\$18,793.00
Law Library Fund	0	\$109,510.00
CDBG Loan Repayment	0	\$61,135.00
Grants	0	\$860,325.00
Victim's Rights	1	\$126,471.00
Law Enforcement Road Patrol	0	\$1,043,261.00
Social Welfare Fund	0	\$29,500.00
Child Care – Circuit Court Family	34.5	\$5,602,447.00
Child Care – Welfare Fund	0	\$2,100.00
Soldiers Relief Fund	1	\$139,800.00
Veterans Trust Fund	0	\$19,000.00
Senior Millage	4	\$1,976,255.00
Farmland Preservation	0	\$234.00
Fitness Center Fund	0	\$89,633.00
TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS:		\$42,860,895.00
TOTAL FUNDS		\$95,634,940.00
TOTAL NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEES	393	
Note: FTEs were calculated by 1 for Regular Full Time, .5 for Regular Part-Time (independent of hours worked and did not include seasonal, temporary, or irregular part-time.		