



THE STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

JUNE 8, 2017



Allegan County Strategy Map

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

Provide valuable and necessary quality services to our
CUSTOMERS

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

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.

Maintain our
FINANCIAL STABILITY

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



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.

Continuously improve our
PROCESSES

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

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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Table of Contents

Contact Information	ii
Table of Contents	1
Introduction	3
United and Engaged Workforce.....	4
Employee Engagement Team	4
Employee Engagement Survey	4
Organizational Training.....	5
Compensation & Classification Study.....	5
Wellness.....	5
Leadership Conference	6
Continuously Improve Our Processes	7
County Payroll Processing Improvement.....	7
Continued Web-based Service Development	7
Enhanced 911 (e911) Compliance for Businesses & Organizations.....	8
911 Radio System Replacement	8
Maintain Our Financial Stability.....	9
Courthouse Square.....	10
Economic Development.....	10
Provide Valuable and Necessary Quality Services	11
Senior and Veteran Services.....	11
Customer Service Team	11
Parcel Viewer.....	12
Animal Shelter.....	12
North Shore Drain	12
Dog Licensing Technology	13
Community Health Needs Assessment	13
Allegan County Legal Assistance Center	14
Drug Treatment Court.....	14
Mental Health Treatment Court	15
Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program.....	16
Veterans Treatment Court.....	16
Truancy Direct Referral Diversion Program	17
2016 Closed Projects.....	18
Specialized Enforcement Officer	18
Walker Drain Project.....	18
Environmental Health SWORD Solution	19
Web-based Service Development	19

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

MCT Replacement.....	20
9-1-1 Telephone System	20
Friend of the Court File Room Conversion.....	20
<hr/>	
Conclusion.....	21
Appendix A	22

Introduction

We are proud to present the 2017 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 mentioned above, one of our top strategic initiatives is having an engaged workforce. Through this engagement, employees foster a positive team-based work environment and as such we are particularly pleased to see how this organization is demonstrating throughout this report the importance of collaborating across service areas and agencies to deliver valuable quality services to our customers.

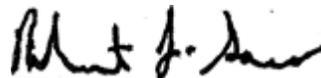
After reading this report, please provide us with your feedback via a short survey at: <http://allegancounty.2017-state-of-the-county.sgizmo.com/s3>.

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

Sincerely,



Dean Kapenga
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 were aimed at supporting a united and engaged workforce. Specific projects and 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, initiatives and accomplishments 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 which included an appreciation ice cream social that featured games and years of service employee banners; 66 participants.



- Sponsored a golf outing at the Lynx on June 3, 2016, for team building and funding future Employee Engagement events; 34 participants and \$490 raised.



- Hosted our first annual chili cook-off at the Sheriff’s Office. Employees could enter as a team or as an individual; 7 chili entries and 41 tasters. We had 2 individuals and 5 teams competing for first place. The winner was the Information Services Team.

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

Employee Engagement Survey

One goal of the Engagement Team is to survey employees every 3 years. With the last survey

in 2014, the team is ramping up to release another survey late summer/early Fall of 2017. Based on those results, the Engagement Team will continue to monitor successes and develop plans to implement the items identified by employees.

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

Organizational Training

The Employee Engagement Team, along with the help of several individuals inside and outside the organization, we were able to provide county employees with multiple training opportunities throughout the year. The training classes included: First Aid, Lockdown, Cultural Diversity, DiSC®, Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel, Protecting your Digital Self, Risk Liability & Claims Processing, Coaching and Counseling, Conflict Management, CPR, and De-Escalation. The team will continue to provide annual training to our employees based on the needs of the organization.

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

Compensation & Classification Study

Due to a need identified through the 2014 Engagement Survey, the County conducted a compensation study. The data is under review and the financial implications are being studied.

The goals for this project include:

- An independent review of the compensation package,
- Plan for personnel costs over the next five years,
- Ensure overall compensation package is fair, equitable and reasonably competitive,

- Develop an ongoing system of keeping the data up-to-date and evaluating position changes in a fair and objective manner.

The project was designed to enable:

- Input into the process and communication/education throughout,
- Representation and participation by all teams/groups,
- Reliability/validity of the results,
- Utilization of data to support decisions that can be planned for, implemented and maintained.

Implementation of the compensation plan generated by the compensation study data is under consideration. The overall plan is currently being reviewed and discussed with the Joint Employee Group Team. Participants include representatives from both bargaining and non-bargaining groups.

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

Wellness

The Wellness Team exists to support the continued development of fully integrated and comprehensive worksite wellness initiatives for Allegan County employees and spouses. In 2016, we focused on:

- Maintaining a high participation rate in the Employee Wellness Program,
- A 12-month activity calendar that supports holistic wellness (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, relational, environmental and financial),
- Fitness Center equipment update plan for 2017.

Additional Wellness activities that occurred in 2016 and will continue in 2017:

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

- Wellness program participation incentive for employees, with 2017 protocol change to 2 assessments per year,
- Personal wellness coaching, 5K training, weight management, smoking cessation, lunch and learn sessions, healthy behavior challenges, self-care book, monthly health letter,
- Suspended Fitness Center monthly fee,
- Healthier vending food and drink.

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)	2014	2015	2016
Number of Employees participating in Biometric Assessment, Coaching & Health Survey	133	255	273
Employee Participation Rate (based on matching eligibility)	39%	75%	80%

Project Lead: Amy Doeden, Wellness Coordinator – 269.673.0240

Leadership Conference

The fifth annual leadership conference based on the components of Allegan County's strategy map was held on October 26, 2016, at the Luella Collins Community Center in Wayland. With 82 in attendance, the conference provided training and networking opportunities for County leaders and

representatives from local municipalities and agencies. During our first four years, the areas of focus have included: Supporting a united and engaged work force, continuously improving processes, maintaining financial stability and excellence in customer service. This year, the emphasis was on lessons learned and the importance of combining the individual elements to create strategies to develop effective solutions that drive results. We also had the opportunity to see how to develop SMART objectives and to utilize tools to achieve successful results. The day covered presentations and hands-on learning from the following:

- Deena Bosworth - Michigan Association of Counties (MAC) - Legislative Challenges and Opportunities facing local government,
- Jeff Bankowski, Michael Zingsheim, Jim Willems and Holly Grandy-Miller from the State of Michigan - Office of Performance and Transformation – spoke on their strategic planning process and the effects it has on their organization,
- Robert J. Sarro – Allegan County - Allegan County's Strategies for Success,
- Trina Poston, Amy Sequeira – Haworth - Develop SMART objectives and utilizing tools to achieve successful results,
- Dean Kapenga -Southwest Michigan Alliance for Region Three (SMART) - Local Government Round Table.

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

County Payroll Processing Improvement

The County previously had employee hours being submitted on more than ten different styles of timesheets using many varied methods of reporting. In 2016, a new timesheet was developed that could be used by all employees. Approximately 74 hours were spent developing, testing and introducing the project. Updated payroll processing instructions were prepared and distributed to all persons responsible for payroll entry and approval. Live training was offered to departments.

Overall the clarity, accuracy and understanding of what information is required has greatly improved. Now when an employee completes their new timesheet properly, the review is able to be accomplished much more quickly; approximately 2015 (7.75hrs) to 2017 (6.56hrs) each payroll. There is still some

remedial work going on, but the project continues to show improvement.

Project Lead: Jennifer Mitchell, Payroll Specialist – 269.673.0314.

Continued Web-based Service Development

Each year the Information Services team focuses attention on continuously improving the information, content, and services found on the county website. In 2016, the following modifications were made with respect to these efforts:

- [Senior Services Website](#)¹ was redesigned to provide more immediate information updated by appropriate staff members.
- [Senior Referral Form](#)² was redesigned in a mobile-friendly format, providing faster notification to the appropriate service area, and now includes reporting features.
- [Veteran's Treatment Court Website](#)³ was newly created.
- [Tourist Council Website](#)⁴ was redesigned in a mobile-friendly format and added the ability for the public to submit events for posting consideration to the new online calendar.
- [GIS Mapping Portal](#)⁵ was newly created.
- [Online Drain Assessment Payoff Request Form](#)⁶ was created to replace a printable mail-in form.

GoOnline: [Allegan County Website](#)⁷

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

¹ cms.allegancounty.org/sites/Office/SS

² www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3153745/Senior-Referral-Form

³ www.wmrvtc.com/

⁴ www.visitallegancounty.com

⁵ www.allegancounty.org/gis

⁶ allegancounty.drain-assessment-payoff-request.sgizmo.com/s3/

⁷ www.allegancounty.org

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 2016 and has been moved to the 2017 projects list. Federal mandate extended the required compliance date to December 2019.

Project Lead: Randy VanAtter, Network Administrator – 269.673.0470

911 Radio System Replacement

In 2015 a request for proposal was issued to replace the County's current 800 MHz radio system. In June 2016 Motorola Solutions with Michigan Public Safety Communications System was selected as the most qualified vendor. In September 2016 staff members of Allegan County Central Dispatch traveled to Elgin, Illinois to perform in-factory testing and inspection of the new radio system. In February 2017 installation of new DC Power Plants and Generators began at tower locations. Structural analysis was also completed on all of the towers. In addition, the County's Radio Project Team reconvened to design and plan the radio template designs for the public safety talk groups. At this time, the project remains on time, on budget, and in scope. The project is scheduled to wrap up between December of 2017 and March of 2018.

Project Lead: Jeremy Ludwig, Central Dispatch Director – 269.686.4564

Maintain Our Financial Stability

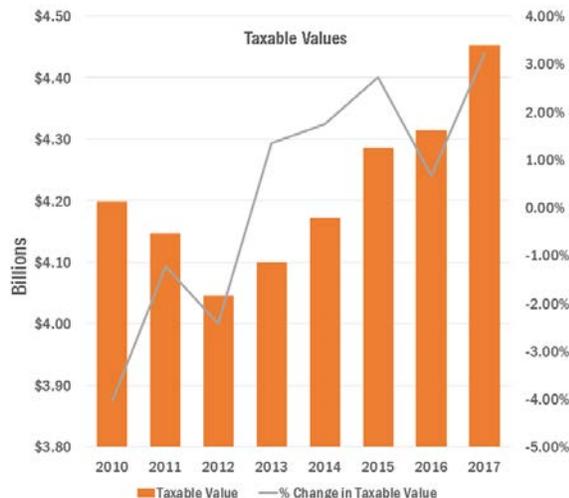
The third strategic goal, to **Maintain our Financial Stability**, is another critical element of the overall vision and mission of the County. Three strategic priorities have been developed that are aimed at maintaining the County’s financial stability:

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

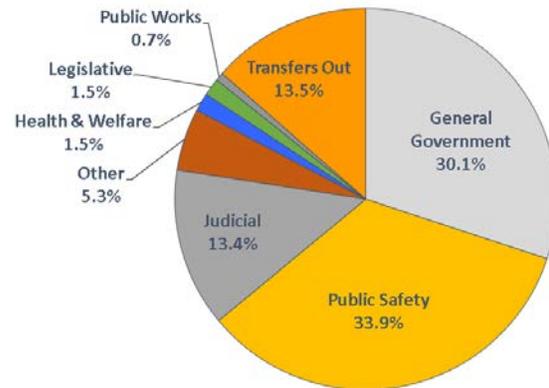
To meet these strategic priorities, the County has engaged in various projects and initiatives, several of which are detailed in the following section. Background on the present state of Allegan County finances is also included.

Background

The total market value of real and personal property in Allegan County is approximately \$12.2 billion. As shown by the chart below, the County’s Taxable values have generally continued to increase with the improving economy, and have recovered to levels existing before the housing crash. In the previous 3 years the taxable values increased by 1.74% in 2014, 2.73% in 2015, and 0.66% in 2016. Taxable values will increase by 3.22% in 2017.



Allegan County’s finances remain strong as a result of our 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 Budget Stabilization Fund is maintained at the maximum level allowed by law. The Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund, which is used to purchase delinquent taxes from local taxing units within the County, is set at 150% of the current year’s settlement. The General Fund, Road Commission Fund and Special Revenue Funds have a combined total operating budget of \$115,906,429 for 2017. 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 2017 General Fund adopted budget is \$34,624,456. As shown in the chart below, approximately 64% of the General Fund budgeted expenditures represent either Public Safety (33.9%) or General Government (30.1%).



GoOnline: [A Public Guide to County Finances⁸](http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/FIN/Dashboard/AC_2016CitizensGuideFinances.pdf)

Lead Contact: Lorna Nenciarini, Executive Director of Finance – 269.673.0228

⁸www.allegancounty.org/docs/FIN/Dashboard/AC_2016CitizensGuideFinances.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. In the fall of 2016 the old section of the parking lot received a fresh seal coat and the full parking lot was restriped. In October 2016 the lawn around the new parking lot had sprinklers installed and was hydro seeded. 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 February 2017 a full project stakeholder kickoff meeting was held. A wide audience of stakeholders representing the Courts, Law Enforcement and Administration were in attendance. Led by an architect, the agenda consisted of brainstorming ideas about needs by the various stakeholders and considering space available within the unassigned area at the southwest corner of the Sheriff's Office and Corrections Center Building. The project timeline is being formalized and discussions continue for other possible housing locations.

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.

A five year plan was created to sustain economic development through public/private investment partnerships. Members of the EDC have begun securing key private investment partnerships to move forward with the expansion of economic development services and establishment of Allegan County Economic Development as a recognized brand within the community. An overall goal of \$240,000 was established with \$107,000 secured to date. For its three-year dashboard report (2016-2018), the EDC is ahead or on target for all goals.

Metric	Current	Goal (2016-18)
Jobs	378	500
Investment	\$94.6M	\$80M
Training \$	\$671K	\$300K
On-site Calls	75	225
Projects	13	8

Major EDC projects include:

- Perrigo Distribution Center – Business attraction project estimated at \$35 million in investment to Allegan Township. Approximately 80 initial jobs with 200+ projected.
- Haworth-Douglas site – Brownfield redevelopment project of large industrial site, potential for 75+ jobs. Working with developer, City of Douglas and state government for site rehabilitation and readiness.

GoOnline: [Allegan County Economic Development Commission](http://www.allegancountyedc.org/)⁹

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

⁹ 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, annually selects one service to review to identify areas that would add value and/or create efficiencies in the service. For 2016 the focus was on improving the Senior Transportation program. A centralized intake process was created for all senior transportation requests. This provides customers with one phone number to reserve

Senior Services Service Levels	2014	2015	2016
Home-Delivered Meals served	59,005	60,595	62,393
Adult Day Care hours	12,875	14,582	13,313
In-Home Support hours	32,678	34,215	35,642
Transportation (miles)	199,016	198,362	168,979
PERS (units)	109	112	145

a volunteer driver or request a transit bus for their transportation needs. Additionally, Senior Services is working with the current provider to transition from a contract-based service to providing the service directly through a County volunteer driver pool. The purpose of this transition is to reduce the cost per mile by removing all administrative costs associated with providing this service which reduces the cost of volunteer transportation by \$.49 per mile.

Veteran Services, in partnership with the Veterans Administration, hosted its fourth Annual Homeless Veteran Stand Down in August 2016 where 67 veterans received assistance. The team has four accredited Veteran Service Counselors on staff to assist Veterans with emergency assistance and claims preparation.

Veteran Services Service Levels	2014	2015	2016
Forms filed with the Veterans Administration	686	649	865
Veterans Trust Fund Applications filed	17	15	7*
Veterans Relief Fund Applications filed	70	65	22
Veterans seen in the office	715	642	847
Burials	16	4	6
West Michigan Veterans Assistance Program	9	17	8

*Beginning in July 2016, the Trust Fund is no longer administered at the local level.

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

Customer Service Team

In June 2015 a Customer Services Team was formed. The team is made up of representatives from several service areas, including both elected and administrative offices. The first initiative for the Customer Service Team was to develop a customer

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

satisfaction survey. This survey went live in the Spring of 2016. 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. Feedback from the surveys gives us the opportunity to celebrate our successes and improve our processes.

Starting in January 2017 the team switched from using *Survey Monkey* to using *Survey Gizmo* to distribute the survey. It was determined that using *Survey Gizmo* would be an easier for both residents and staff to use. While getting the surveys ready for *Survey Gizmo*, the team went through each individual service area's questions to determine if they were really needed (what value did it supply) and to ensure language was consistent across all surveys; making it even more user friendly for everyone. The team will continue monitoring the results of the four common questions and this data will be placed in the quarterly reports.

Project Lead: Brandy Gildea, Parks Coordinator – 269.673.0378

Parcel Viewer

The parcel viewer is intended for public viewing of parcels on top of the Allegan County 2014 aerial photo. Search criteria to include parcel search, address search and owner search are being developed. Future enhancements to the basic parcel viewer will include adding multiple years of aerial photos, contour data and basic print functionality.

GoOnline: [GIS Parcel Viewer](#)¹⁰

Project Lead: Neil Besteman, GIS Analyst – 269.673.0538

¹⁰ www.allegancounty.org/gis

Animal Shelter

The Animal Shelter, in its partnership with Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance, continues to offer a valuable service to Allegan County. Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance cares for the animals at the shelter while they wait to be adopted by a family or returned to their owners. Donations of shelter needs increased in 2016.

The Animal Shelter and Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance participated in two events sponsored by Bissell called “Empty the Shelters”. Through this event, 49 animals were adopted. In addition, the Animal Shelter participates in adoption events every Saturday at local pet stores. In 2016 the annual fund raising event called “Wag-n-Walk,” not only helped to raise awareness of the Animal Shelter but also raised \$4,000.

This year the Board of Commissioners approved a contract amendment which allow the Animal Shelter to set and collect their own adoption fees. This has helped to improve the flow of funds through the shelter.

Animal Shelter Service Levels	2015	2016
Cats Taken In	403	342
Cats Adopted	262	266
Cats Transferred	139	16
Cats Euthanized	39	32
Cats Returned to Owner	4	8
Dogs Taken In	740	596
Dogs Adopted	376	307
Dogs Transferred	93	18
Dogs Euthanized	61	60
Dogs Returned to Owner	212	211

Project Lead: Randy Rapp, Environmental Health Director – 269.686.4506

North Shore Drain

The North Shore Drain project in Casco Township started out with a difficult set of circumstances by having a large petition

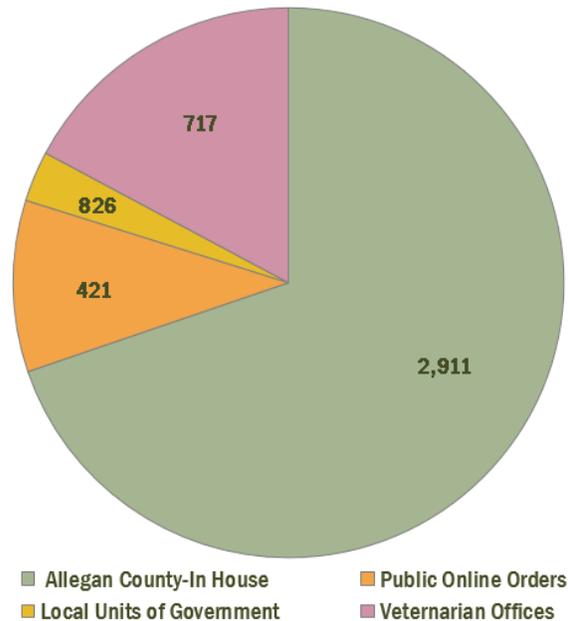
project from the 90’s on the same drain. However, engineers and the Allegan County Drain Commissioner were able to overcome this and a myriad of other financial, physical and permitting obstacles to complete the project. As it is with most projects in this area of the State, it had been promised that the majority of the work would not occur between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Construction started in December of 2015, picked back up in April of 2016 and was substantially complete by June of 2016. Some final cleanup and punch list work was finished in September and October of 2016, but the work has been in place and tested with several large rain events with many of the residents praising its functionality and appearance was well. The engineer and the Drain Commissioner have received several emails and calls thanking them for their work and for tackling a problematic issue in an area that no one wanted to take on.

Project Lead: Denise Medemar, Drain Commissioner – 269.673.0376 or Peter Klooster, Deputy Drain Commissioner/Engineer – 269.673.0379

Dog Licensing Technology

2016 was the first full year of operation of the new web-based dog licensing program implemented by Allegan County Treasurer Sally Brooks. The new program significantly improves customer service and accessibility, all without increasing the cost of dog licensing. The new program allows for year-round licensing, with license renewals corresponding to rabies vaccination expiration dates. Allegan County residents can now purchase or renew dog licenses online, by mail, or in person at the County Treasurer’s Office. Additionally, residents can now purchase or renew licenses at one of six participating veterinarians or one of six local units of government that have agreed to offer this valuable service.

2016 Dog Licenses - Total Tags Sold - 4,875



A total of 4,875 licenses were sold, split among in-office sales, online orders, local units of government, and veterinarian offices.

Goals for 2017 include increasing the number of participating veterinarians and local units of government, and expanding paperless renewal noticing.

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

Community Health Needs Assessment

Under the Michigan Public Health Code, ensuring a community health needs assessment be completed is the responsibility of the local health department for its jurisdiction. Allegan County Public Health (ACPH) facilitated a basic community health needs assessment (CHNA) in 2014. The three indicators that were picked as priorities by the steering committee were access to care, diet and exercise, and family and social support. A community health improvement plan (CHIP) was put in place to address those issues. Many items were completed from that plan, including reducing obesity by 4% since 2014. That model was centered on the County Health Rankings. That model did

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

allow for evaluation of progress but did not allow for basic needs to be addressed. In first quarter of 2017, collaborating with other sectors United Way facilitated a comprehensive needs assessment that addressed four focus areas; health, education, basic needs, and financial sustainability. ACPH, collaborating with other sectors, will use this report to identify gaps in those focus areas and actions to bridge these gaps and update the CHIP. Together: striving for a healthier Allegan County.

GoOnline: [Community Health Needs Assessment](#)¹¹

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, ACLAC is 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 8,000 patrons since its inception.

ACLAC welcomes individuals who have civil court cases are representing themselves in court. 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 has also provided free community training on Landlord/Tenant law, Personal Protection Orders, Debt and Bankruptcy and Friend of the Court procedures.

ACLAC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded, in part, through a

pilot-program grant from the Michigan State Bar Foundation. ACLAC receives financial and in kind support from the County of Allegan, the Allegan County Community Foundation, United Way, the Mignon Sherwood DeLano Foundation and the Allegan County Bar Association. ACLAC also receives private donations and engages in fundraising activities.

Year	Patrons Served
2017 (as of March 31, 2017)	673
2016	2,213
2015	2,152
2014	1,816
2013	1,254
2012	261
Total Since Inception	8,369

“The Allegan County Legal Assistance Center provides self-represented litigants with access to justice, providing them assistance in court procedures, forms and legal resources. ACLAC has responded to over 8,000 contacts (patrons often return for more information), resulting in increased public service for the citizens of Allegan County. The Board of Directors is grateful for the volunteers, staff 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](#)¹²

Project Lead: Nicole Back, Program Manager – 269.686.5221

Drug Treatment Court

Currently in its 6th 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

¹¹ www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

¹² www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

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, 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” (where the 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 inception, a total of 48 participants have been admitted.

Year	Participants Admitted
2011	7
2012	3
2013	13
2014	7
2015	6
2016	12
Total Since Inception	48

During 2016 six participants were discharged from the program – five successfully and one unsuccessfully, due to a new offense or non-compliance. This brings the cumulative total over the past five years to 21 participants successfully completing the drug court, two have transferred to another drug court jurisdiction and ten participants were unsuccessful and were removed from the program. There are currently 23 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 Joseph 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 Administrator’s 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, 319 defendants have been referred to the program. Of those 319, 183 were rejected and 136 were accepted into the program. Of the 136 who were accepted, 79 have successfully graduated, and 11 are currently in the program – 9 in Phase I and 2 in Phase II. Forty-six were discharged unsuccessfully from the program after

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

acceptance – 40 for cause and six for other reasons. The program accepts both felony and misdemeanor cases.

Of the 11 current participants, 10 have misdemeanor charges and 1 participant has a felony charge. Twelve participants successfully graduated from the program in 2016.

“What we do in Mental Health Court is to help these people deal with their illness so they can do their best with the abilities they have. Hopefully, we have given them some skills to make the best life possible for themselves.” - Judge Skocelas

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 5th year with the Allegan County Circuit Court. 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. 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/or have mental health problems. SSSPP participants are closely monitored, including frequent random drug testing, and meetings with the case manager/probation staff. SSSPP aims to improve probationer success by promptly imposing sanctions, including small amounts of jail time, for probation violations.

Since the program’s inception, there have been 31 successful graduates. The program currently has 25 clients and only 1 is currently unemployed. SSSPP has partnered with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) to offer additional services regarding

employment, help with transportation, resume building, interviewing skills, and group therapy. Individual and group counseling, outpatient, and residential treatment are some of the services available within the program to help promote a law abiding lifestyle.

GoOnline: [Hawaii's HOPE Program](#)¹³

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 and is now in its third full year. The court currently has 12 veterans participating, with new applicants being reviewed by the team for admission as they arise. Of those 12 participants, 1 is from Van Buren County, 2 are from Kalamazoo, 1 is from Ottawa, and 8 are from Allegan. Two participants were unsuccessfully discharged, one participant withdrew voluntarily, and one is now deceased. The court had its first graduate in August of 2015. In 2016, two graduated successfully, bringing the program

¹³ <http://hopehawaii.net/>

lifetime total to five graduates successfully completing the program since its inception in 2014.

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

Truancy Direct Referral Diversion Program

Truancy is the action of staying away from school without good reason; absenteeism. In the 2016-17 school year, the Family Court expanded its truancy diversion program to the Hopkins Public school district, thereby expanding the program to four total districts: Hopkins, Allegan, Plainwell, and Fennville. As of March 2017, the court received 34 referrals for students who are at risk of becoming truant. Of those 34 referrals, 25 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 9 cases where meetings are still pending. Only 2 of those 34 cases went to the formal court docket.

As a way to enhance the truancy program, the court streamlined the way it handles formal truancy petitions. All formal petitions received by the court are scheduled within a week for a preliminary hearing before the presiding Family Court judge and placed on bond surveillance to monitor school attendance while the case is pending. Formally adjudicated truants are placed on the court's Frequent Review docket to allow for more consistent contact with the court, a higher level of accountability for the juvenile, and more rapid response to problems as they arise.

The truancy diversion program has been well-received by participating school districts, 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. The diversion program, coupled with a new, streamlined process for formal cases, is meant to address attendance issues on a county-wide scale in an efficient, timely manner.

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

2016 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.

Specialized Enforcement Officer

The Friend of the Court (FOC) Specialized Enforcement Officer has worked to develop a specific program under the Alternative Contempt Track (ACT Program) statute. The documents that have been created include an Eligibility Questionnaire, Admission Order, Case Service Plan template, Review Order, Sanctions Grid and Certificate of Achievement. The ACT program Local Administrative Order (LAO) was submitted to the State Court Administrator's Office and Friend of the Court Bureau and was approved in March 2016. Allegan County FOC is the first County in the state to submit an LAO under the Alternative Contempt Track statute. The plan will be presented to the Circuit Court Judges for implementation. The Specialized Enforcement Officer has also worked to make contact with multiple service providers in the surrounding area and the state level to set up and develop a working relationship for services for the participants of the ACT program once it is fully implemented. The FOC is making continued progress on this project, and is hopeful it will be fully implemented by mid-year 2017. The FOC will be tracking the program outcomes and will continually monitor the results for additional changes, modifications, and successes.

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](#)¹⁴

¹⁴ www.allegancounty.org/Government/LAC/Index.asp

Project Lead: Denise Medemar, Drain Commissioner – 269.673.0376

Environmental Health SWORD Solution

SWORD software has been utilized by the Environmental Health Field Team for about a year. It has assisted with compiling accurate numbers for the quarterly reports to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and Allegan County Board of Commissioners. Environmental Health is also using SWORD software to compile time and activity data to accurately reflect time spent providing the service delivered. Accurate time computation will allow for evaluation of current fees and determine what the fee needs to be to cover the cost of the service provided.

Additionally, SWORD has provided Environmental Health with the opportunity to provide the public with the ability to email the permit application in lieu of mailing it. This has aided in reducing the amount of time it takes to deliver the permit to the applicant.

The Environmental Health Field Team has been unable to reduce the 21 day turnaround time by 20%. The drawing application in this software is cumbersome. We are continuing to review our processes to discover ways we can use and improve SWORD while decreasing the turnaround time. In 2016 the benchmark of 21 days turn around was met 69% of the time.

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

Web-based Service Development

In 2015, the Information Services team improved the information, content, and services provided by the Allegan County website. 2016 updates have been included in the list below:

- Geographic Information Services (GIS) Data Library – Provides freely available

Parcel, Contour and other GIS data to the public for download and use - The Data Library project is completed, and will be updated with on-going maintenance and data additions as they become available. For example, the Zoning Data layer was added to the County-wide section in February of 2017. Below is the amount of data downloaded from the GIS Data Library in 2016:

GIS Downloads	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Data layers	276	279	321	254
Maps	24	36	32	29

- Clerk’s Office website (New Vital Records site). There was a 28% increase over the previous year’s visits to the Clerk’s Office (Vital Records) website in 2016.
- Probate Court website (redesigned with much more content, including an online fee calculator). There was a 102% increase over the previous year’s visits to the Probate Court website in 2016.
- Circuit Court Family Division website also much more content added. There was a 46% increase over the previous year’s visits to the Circuit Court’s Family Division website in 2016.
- Customer Service Survey - This survey has undergone changes based on customer feedback and continues to be reviewed by the Customer Service Team for continuous improvement opportunities. They plan to use the data collected to improve customer service across all areas of the County.
- **GoOnline:** [New Dog License Application](#)¹⁵
- Social Media update:
 - ✓ Facebook ‘Likes’ - There was a 19% increase in Facebook ‘Likes’ in 2016 over the previous year.

¹⁵cms.allegancounty.org/sites/Office/Treasurer/SitePages/Dogs.aspx

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

- ✓ 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).

Project Lead: Deb Jones, Web Developer – 269.673.0470

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 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, the new model of 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

9-1-1 Telephone System

In 2015, Allegan County sought and acquired the services of a 911 phone system vendor through the County's Request for Proposal process. West formerly *Intrado* was chosen and contracted with 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

Friend of the Court File Room Conversion

Electronic files were emptied in a Friend of the Court (FOC) file room in 2013-14. A proposal to change this empty space into individualized office space has been submitted. 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

Conclusion

We hope you enjoyed reading the 2017 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://allegancounty.2017-state-of-the-county.sgizmo.com/s3/>.

Appendix A

GENERAL FUND	# Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTE's)	2017 Budget
Fund Balance	N/A	\$3,530,598
Board of Commissioners/Legal	7	\$443,883
Courts	45.5	\$4,213,998
Administration	2.5	\$333,025
Elections	0	\$114,726
Financial Services	4.5	\$346,986
Clerk	9.5	\$597,482
Equalization	6	\$467,342
Human Resources	4.5	\$419,310
Prosecuting Attorney	13.5	\$1,274,710
Register of Deeds	4	\$299,323
Treasurer	6	\$519,323
Cooperative Extension	0	\$89,496
Network Systems/Telephone/Land Information Services/Records	13	\$1,746,341
Facilities Management	11	\$2,699,716
Drain Commissioner	4	\$371,962
Sheriff's Department	100	\$10,072,058
Emergency Management	1	\$113,639
Plat Board	0	\$157
Local Emergency Planning Committee	0	\$34,140
Animal Shelter	1	\$100,051
Livestock Claims	0	\$2,050
Department of Public Works	0	\$13,517
Drains - Public Benefit	0	\$116,954
Monumentation Program	0	\$95,000
Substance Abuse	0	\$191,845
Communicable Diseases	0	\$7,500
Medical Examiner	0	\$188,792
Veterans Services	2	\$101,080
Economic Development	0	\$35,000
Other Fringe Benefits/Insurance/Contingencies	0	\$1,559,126
Transfers Out	0	\$4,474,326
TOTAL GENERAL FUND		\$34,624,456
ROAD COMMISSION FUND	51	\$40,198,863

STATE OF ALLEGAN COUNTY 2017

SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS:	# FTE's	2017 Budget
Parks/Recreation	2	\$347,221
Central Dispatch / E911/CIP	23	\$8,288,869
Friend of the Court	0	\$316,764
Friend of The Court Office	18	\$1,576,154
Health	24	\$3,563,815
Transportation Grant	3.5	\$2,632,209
Multi Agency Collaborative	0	\$18,011
Public Improvement Fund	0	\$5,207,593
CIP Building Capital	0	\$1,550,000
Youth Home CIP	0	\$493,000
Local Revenue Sharing	0	\$372,423
Annual Projects	0	\$715,000
Animal Shelter	0	\$101,860
Register of Deeds Automation Fund	0	\$780,912
Budget Stabilization Fund	0	\$4,206,063
Sick and Vacation Liability	0	\$319,633
Palisades Emergency Planning	0	\$50,688
Concealed Pistol Licensing Fund	0	\$22,665
Local Corrections Officers Training Fund	0	\$130,088
Drug Law Enforcement Fund – Sheriff/Prosecutor & D.A.R.E.	0	\$175,750
Justice Training Fund	0	\$21,363
Law Library Fund	0	\$102,512
CDBG Loan Repayment	0	\$71,862
Grants and Grant Administration	0	\$775,573
Victim's Rights	1	\$129,300
Law Enforcement Road Patrol	0	\$872,072
Social Welfare Fund	0	\$29,955
Child Care – Circuit Court Family	34.5	\$5,750,098
Child Care – Welfare Fund	0	\$5,594
Soldiers Relief Fund	.5	\$124,267
Veterans Trust Fund	0	\$50
Senior Millage	2.5	\$2,227,398
Farmland Preservation	0	\$237
Fitness Center Fund	0	\$104,109
TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS:		\$41,083,110
TOTAL FUNDS		\$115,906,429
TOTAL NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEES	395	
Note: FTEs were calculated by 1 for Regular Full Time, .5 for Regular Part-Time (independent of hours worked and do not include seasonal, temporary, or irregular part-time.		