

# RICHLAND COUNTY

Strategic Planning Committee

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August 30, 2021

## NOTICE OF MEETING

Please be advised that the Richland County Strategic Planning Committee will convene at 1 p.m. September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 in the Richland County Board Room on the third floor of the County Courthouse at 181 W. Seminary Street Richland Center, WI 53581 and via videoconference and teleconference using the following information:

WebEx Videoconference:

<https://richlandcounty.my.webex.com/richlandcounty/my/j.php?MTID=m95c18ef72620ce50527962fcdee28722>

Meeting number: 2550 711 6394; Password: richland

WebEx Teleconference: WebEx teleconference phone number: 408-418-9388, Access code: 2550 711 6394

### Agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Proof of notification
3. Agenda approval
4. Approval of previous minutes
5. Discussion and possible action on strategic priorities and values
6. Discussion and possible action regarding edits to the proposed strategic plan
7. Discussion and possible action regarding none-mandate services
8. Discussion and possible action on strategic initiatives impacting future county budgets
9. Future agenda items
10. Adjournment

A quorum may be present from other Committees, Boards, or Commissions. No committee, board or commission will exercise any responsibilities, authority or duties except for the Finance and Personnel Committee.

CC: Committee Members, County Board, Department Heads, Richland Observer, WRCO, Valley Sentinel, Courthouse Bulletin Board

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

August 16th, 2021

The Richland County Strategic Planning Committee convened at 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 16th, 2021, in the Richland County Board Room in the Richland County Courthouse, at 181 W. Seminary St. Richland Center, WI 53581.

Committee members present included County Board Supervisors Ingrid Glasbrenner, Melissa Luck, Steve Williamson, Steve Carrow, and Kerry Severson. Others in attendance: Supervisor Lee Van Landuyt, SWRPC Director Troy Maggied, and Administrator Clinton Langreck

**1. Call to Order:** Supervisor Luck called the meeting to order.

**2. Proof of Notification:** Supervisor Luck verified that the meeting had been properly noticed. Copies of the agenda were sent by email to all Committee members, WRCO and, a copy was posted on the Courthouse Bulletin Board and a copy was emailed to The Richland Observer and the Valley Sentinel.

**3. Agenda Approval:** Motion by Supervisor Glasbrenner, seconded by Williamson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**4. Election of Committee Officers:** Motion Luck, second by Williams to nominate Supervisor Glasbrenner as Chair. Motion by Williamson, seconded by Carrow to nominate Supervisor Luck as chair. Motion to close nominations by Williamson, seconded by Carrow. Voice vote. Motion Carried. Motion to close nominations and cast unanimous vote for Supervisor Glasbrenner as committee chair. by Williamson, seconded by Carrow. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Chair Glassbrenner began presiding over the meeting.

Motion by Williamson to nominate Supervisor Luck as vice-chair, seconded by Glasbrenner. Motion to close nominations and cast unanimous vote for supervisor Luck as vice-chair. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Motion by Williamson to nominate Supervisor Severson as secretary, seconded by Luck. Motion by Williamson to close nominations and cast unanimous vote for supervisor Severson as secretary, seconded by Carrow. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**5. Discussion and possible action regarding committee scope, goals, and priorities:** Discussion on Deadline as established by resolution which calls for a plan in place by the end of 2021. Discussion on scope. Discussion on how to share and edit plans. Discussion on Troy Maggied will be opening a google doc and google sheet to share with the committee to help share real-time updates. Discussion on soliciting goals and priorities to departments to seek feedback on priorities and core values. Reviewed the strategic priorities and developed suggested edits on the definitions of Effectiveness, Growth, Focus and Improvement. Reviewed of the Core Values of: Integrity, Public Service, Accountability, and Open-minded. The committee discussed soliciting the proposed list of priorities and values to piloted departments with two questions to understand how they may impact current and future operations. Discussion on not using google doc or google sheet for fear of violating open meetings. The committee will bring suggested edits to the meeting to discuss.

Motion by Carrow to initiate a committee presence on the County website, seconded by Williamson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Motion by Luck to solicit cover letter explanation and two questions regarding the priorities and values to the selected departments to gather feedback, seconded by Williamson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**6. Discussion and possible action regarding planning calendar and timelines:** discussion on next meeting, action taken under agenda item 8.

**7. Discussion and possible action regarding the strategic plan:** no action, discussion was had on priorities and values under agenda item 5.

**8. Adjournment:** Motion by Williamson, seconded by Severson to adjourn to Thursday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:00pm in the County Board Room

Clinton Langreck  
Richland County — County Administrator

# Chapter 1: Strategic Plan Framework

Strategic planning is the process by which leaders of an organization determine what it intends to be in the future and how it will get there. A strategic plan serves as a community's roadmap and is used to prioritize initiatives, resources, goals, and department operations and projects. Strategic planning helps your local government realize its long-term vision by setting up goals and objectives in a systematic, incremental manner. Simply put, it makes you take a look at what's going on today, where you want to be tomorrow and which steps you will need to take to get there.

During early 2021, the Richland County Board of Supervisors participated in four strategic planning conversations, facilitated by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held via Zoom. Meetings were open to the public, and invitees included all 21 members of the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator.

The schedule and topics were as follows:

- January 27 – Core values, stakeholders, mission, and vision
- February 10 – Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and Political, Economical, Social and Technological (PEST) analyses and development of strategic initiatives
- February 24 – Organizational capability and goal development
- March 10 – Capital facility investments and plan implementation

SWWRPC also conducted one-on-one interviews with individuals who provided additional input into county issues. Citizen and municipal insight was also acquired through community planning work running concurrent to the strategic planning process. All materials for these meetings are retained in the SWWRPC office and available upon request.

Figure 1. Organizational Chart of Richland County Administration and Government

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 10:53 AM  
**Deleted: Opportunities and Challenges**

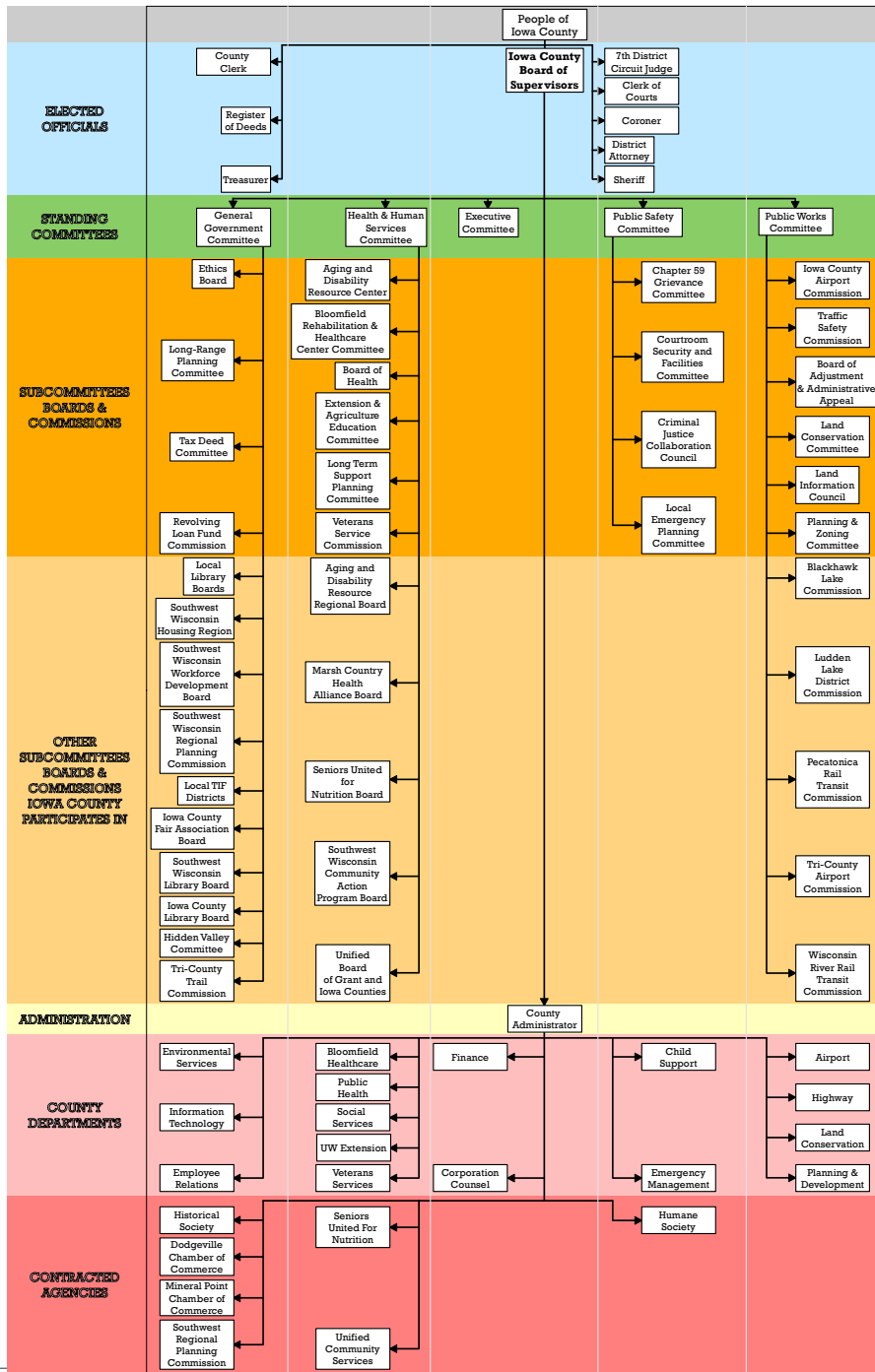
Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 4:59 PM  
**Comment [1]:** Can/should we see strategic plan for Richland Center, other communities?

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:01 PM  
**Comment [2]:** This paragraph is simply taken from the web when I googled “why is a strategic plan important?” could be scrapped, re-worded or whatever you want

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:10 PM  
**Comment [3]:** Should the SWOT and PEST results be added as an addenda?

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:29 PM  
**Comment [4]:** Need a chart that depicts all the departments of the county (like the one below in Figure 1 but with everything we do.

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:30 PM  
**Comment [5]:** . I contacted Iowa County to see how they did their Org Chart and it was done using a program the zoning office has access to through the GIS mapping. I have inserted Iowa Counties as a place holder and to see if we really want it inserted in this document or as an addendum



## Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities will address the challenges identified in this plan, and form the basis for recommended actions.

- **Effectiveness** – *Implement operational efficiencies* to reduce the costs and free up revenue.
- **Growth** – Work to *increase the county's population and tax base fund services in a balanced manner*. Richland County must find a balance between infrastructure, workforce, housing and population.
- **Focus** – *Evaluate our discretionary services in order to focus resources on providing services with sustainable revenue.*
- **Improvement** – *Create a culture of continual improvement* to sustain progress. Tasks that bring in younger families to live and work in Richland County.

## Framework for Decision-Making

The county will have to make several hard decisions in the coming years, and it's beyond the ability of this document to detail each step in that process. However, it will serve as a guide during the decision-making process. Prioritizing future investments should be informed by the following criteria.

## Core Values

The county's *practices must be tethered to its principles* if it is to have some coherent strategy moving forward. Core values form the basis for decisions, since they bind decision-makers to their decisions. The County Board provided the following core values during the planning process:

- **Integrity** – Engage in county work with honesty and transparency in all proceedings. Meet commitments. Value the multitude of experiences on the board and the diversity of opinions this brings to decision-making.
- **Public Service** – Serve the county professionally and with competence. Be efficient and objective in decision-making. Focus on doing work that is relevant to both current and future generations of county residents.
- **Accountability** – Assume ownership of decisions. Be diligent and follow-through on projects. Be responsive to the needs of county residents as a whole, while recognizing the intrinsic value of every person. Make decisions that plant seeds of success for the future.
- **Open-minded** – Govern in a collaborative manner, unbiased by personal interest. Listen to the needs of residents, while being aware of future demands on county services.

## Mission and Vision

**Mission:** Richland County will think strategically and anticipate the future, ensuring that the decisions made today will have lasting value and provide fiscal solvency. The needs of individuals will be respected while recognizing responsibility to the community as a whole. Vital community involvement in decision-making is encouraged by providing a venue for citizens who care to contribute to the betterment of the county.

Alternate Mission Statement: Richland County will foster a stable and adequate tax base such that services to the community are financially sound. With this base, the county will strive to continually improve its wisest use of tax revenues to provide services for the common good.

**Vision:** Richland County will be a leader for resilient rural counties and a place where people love life, enjoy work, and are empowered to raise thriving families.

Alternate Vision Statement: To achieve a resilient local economy where housing, jobs and population are in balance, and natural resources and amenities are preserved such that Richland county is a good place to live now and far into the future.

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:04 PM

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Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:05 PM

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Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:05 PM

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Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:38 AM

**Deleted:** Scale back or eliminate discretionary services that cannot provide sustainable revenue to cover their costs.

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:26 PM

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Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:27 PM

**Deleted:** The following Mission and Vision statements were drafted during the Strategic Planning process. Due to the nature of current challenges facing the county. -

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:44 PM

**Comment [6]:** Steve sent some alternate language for both mission and vision statements

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:38 PM

**Deleted:** vibrant

## Focus

The county must focus its efforts on the needs of the future.

The current challenge stems from several factors outside of the county's control, including:

- Stagnating population growth, evidence for which is found in census data, population projections, school enrollment trends, and reports on the county's bond rating (Appendix B).
- State-imposed levy and debt limits.
- Inherited contractual agreements and investments for discretionary enterprises and services.

*"The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do."*

*- Michael Porter, "What is Strategy?"*

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:24 AM

**Comment [7]:** Need to include our strengths first, then our challenges. Add language that the challenges inform our plan. One strength is our increasing fund-balance, rich natural resources, outdoor recreation, dedicated staff, community investment, younger people involved in government, investment in economic development,

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:06 AM

**Deleted:** The defining problem for the Richland County Board of Supervisors is the need to choose which services and enterprises it will financially support. Continuing inherited practices and commitments challenge the ability to plan for future commitments and needs.

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:35 PM

**Comment [8]:** Delete this Figure 1?

## The "Business" of the County

Figure 1 – Richland County Long-term capital needs by business unit



The primary causes of the county's financial issues stem from an inability make hard choices and focus its efforts through intentional action. It must choose which discretionary services to abandon, while

simultaneously investing in community and economic development efforts to grow its population and tax base. Failure to focus will result in budget deficits, inability to pay competitive wages, and deferred maintenance of critical functions and facilities.

In addition to its statutory function, Richland County is currently in the “business” Tri-county Airport, Symons, Pine Valley and UW Platteville-Richland by way of its support or ownership of facilities used in these sectors (Figure 1). Maintenance debt services expenditures associated with discretionary enterprises compete for the same levy funding as statutorily required services, and impact the county’s ability to fully fund its core operations.

### Considerations

When facing difficult decisions, the county will answer the following questions to prioritize investments:

- For each discretionary enterprise, ask the question: *If we weren’t already doing this, would we start doing it today?*
- What action or objective is within the county’s *sphere of control*?
- What is the next *proximate advantage* that will allow the county to make progress towards a larger goal?
- What is the *economic return to the tax payer* associated with this project?
- What is the *social or public good* associated with this project, and *would it cease to exist* if funding was cut?
- Are services able to be effectively *provided by another party* or organization?
- *Is the service we’re providing mandated*, and if so, *is the means of service provision mandated*? If the means of service provision is not mandated, *is there a more effective way of providing the service*?
- Is the project *a lever for creation of additional value or resources*, or *an impediment to service and innovation*?
- How might the county *premeditate actions of other parties* in order to improve its position?
- For discretionary enterprises, *are both the operational and capital outlays affordable over the next 20 years*?

“At the core, strategy is about focus, and most complex organizations don’t focus their resources. Instead, they pursue multiple goals at once, not concentrating enough resources to achieve a breakthrough in any one of them”

- Richard Rumelt, *Good Strategy/Bad Strategy*

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:15 AM  
**Deleted:** government

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:16 AM  
**Deleted:** aviation, recreation, healthcare, and education

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:14 AM  
**Deleted:** mandatory

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:17 AM  
**Deleted:** <#>thriving families. -

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 5:25 PM  
**Deleted:** should



## Chapter 2: Strategic Goals

The County Board made significant strategic decisions in 2019 when they created the positions of County Administrator and Economic Development Director. Recommendations in this chapter build on those initial investments and include projects that were indirectly set in motion as a result of the choice to transition the executive branch of government from an Administrative Coordinator to a County Administrator.

### Organizational Structure

The following strategies will enable the county to find operational efficiencies, thereby freeing up revenue and capacity in the form of staff time.

#### Streamline Organizational Structure (Effectiveness)

Continue the path that began with the creation of the County Administrator, using this position to centralize and coordinate county operations whenever possible.

Tactics:

- [Create county wide organizational chart](#)
- Centralize common county-wide processes and systems under the County Administrator.
  - [Create finance, HR and maintenance department](#)
- Improve the county's procurement process to be consistent county-wide. Maximize procurement rewards or benefits and identify joint procurement opportunities across departments or with other organizations.
  - [Improve purchasing policy](#)
- [Purchase a payroll program that is uniform](#) for employees across all departments or enterprises.

*Quality of a service or product is not what you put into it, but what the customer gets out of it.*

*-Peter Drucker*

#### Improve Financial Practices (Effectiveness)

Implement the following tactics to improve the county's financial accountability, strategy, and flexibility. Doing so will yield improvements in financial education and also help create a baseline for performance metrics.

Tactics:

- Improve the county's bond rating by targeting improvement opportunities identified in Moody's Rating Action of February 2020 and Rating Change of March 2018 (Appendix B).
- Improve the budget process to implement flexibility, strategic thinking, accountability, and implementation of the Strategic Plan. Specific actions include:
  - Create budget narratives summarizing how new initiatives or improvements implement the Strategic Plan.
  - Define value that could be added with 20% *more* funding, or lost due to a 20% *reduction* in funding.
  - Identify cuts that would not impact strategic planning goals or [statutorily required](#) services.
  - Identify how departments would respond to unexpected cuts or [events](#).
- Develop a capital improvement plan inclusive of facilities, roads, and equipment.
- Analyze the county's indirect rate to capture highest possible amount of grant funding, and establish a metric for productivity and efficiency.
- Increase discretionary and variable revenue source (fines, fees, grants, etc.) as a portion of the overall budget.

#### Increase Coordination (Effectiveness)

The county and its municipalities have many over-lapping interests, offering a good opportunity for partnerships that may result in improved service delivery or an overall savings to county residents through efficiencies.

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:48 AM

**Comment [1]:** All of this section we need each goal to link directly to strategic goal listed in section 1

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:48 AM

**Deleted: Operations**

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:32 PM

**Comment [2]:** All tactics listed in this document are addressed in the Workplan with deadlines and responsible party.

Melissa Luck 6/23/2021 10:08 AM

**Comment [3]:** Need more specific language about role of county board chair add as task (intentional leadership)

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 11:56 AM

**Deleted:** Coordinate upgrades to the payroll process so it's

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:00 PM

**Deleted:** mandated

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:00 PM

**Comment [4]:** How would we measure this?

**Tactics:**

- Engage in joint procurement materials and equipment whenever possible.
- Engage in joint contracting for capital projects to find savings resulting from reduced mobilization fees, increased competitive bidding, etc. (e.g. [mowing, paving, road systems, snow plowing](#)).
- Explore opportunities to share or contract staffing services.
- Create additional and modern methods to communicate events and initiatives, and to generate direct input from the community. This could include community engagement via a new website or a social media presence.
- Coordinate community develop and land use decision-making in Richland Center among institutional partners such as Richland County, Richland Center, Richland Hospital, and Richland Local School District.

## Workforce (Growth)

The county's ability to provide quality services relies entirely on the attraction and retention of knowledgeable, [hard-working](#) employees, and the continued acquisition and effective transfer of knowledge.

### Improve employee Pay and HR Policies

The financial cost of turnover is usually minimal compared to the hidden cost of lost productivity during the resulting transition. For this reason, retention of quality employees should be a primary focus to ensure the consistent delivery of high-quality services.

**Tactics:**

- Obtain market value for employee wages as determined through the county's [current](#) wage study.
- [Give annual pay increases](#)
- [Monitor the](#) compensation and classification system for all positions to ensure positions remain market-competitive ([public and private sectors](#)).
- Develop a uniform performance evaluation process that includes annual reviews, 6-month check-ins, and exit interviews.
- Develop a uniform set of human resources policies and procedures to improve transparency and accountability throughout the organization, including an update to the employee handbook and other related documents.

### Develop a culture of support for employees (Improvement)

Non-monetary compensation is also critical to employee retention, since it builds organizational culture that supports employees. There are several ways the county can support these initiatives.

**Tactics:**

- Celebrate success and the professional and personal achievements of employees. Recognize new hires, retirements, and year-of-service milestones. Build a culture that supports and celebrates its people.
- Enable and empower departments to develop celebratory or team-building events. Day-long departmental retreats or other benefits can help build culture at a minimal expense.
- Create a total benefits program for employees that highlights total compensation and investment of the county in its employees, inclusive of salary, fringe benefits, [wellness](#), and professional development.
- [Increase vacation time for new employees.](#)
- [Evaluate flexible work schedules.](#)

### Prioritize Service over Staffing (Improvement)

Prior to refilling a vacant position, the county should evaluate workforce needs through the lens of the service being delivered, not the means of service delivery, and implement the most effective means of service provision.

*"We should work to increase the desirability of being a Richland County employee."*

*- David Turk, Richland County Board Supervisor*

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:11 PM

**Deleted:** County employees are knowledge workers whose value is grounded in the information that enables them to do their job.

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:11 PM

**Deleted:** , therefore,

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:13 PM

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Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:14 PM

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#### Tactics:

- For each unmet existing service or new service being proposed, evaluate staffing needs using the following analysis:
  - How does current staffing compare to peer counties.
  - Can we *Build*? – invest in learning and development required to train staff to provide the service.
  - Should we *Buy*? – post the position, offering market-rate pay for a competitive application process.
  - Is there opportunity to *Borrow*? – collaborate with other entities on cost-sharing this position, or contract it out to a consultant for a short-period.
  - Can you *Bridge* the gap? –fill a vacant position through an intentional succession planning process.
  - Should we *Stop* providing this service or position?

### **Capacity (Effectiveness)**

Capacity, specifically the education and training of the Richland County Board and staff to perform their duties, was a common theme during the planning process. Many newer members wanted further education on various aspects of their job. Staff were commended for their subject-matter knowledge, with further training recommendations focusing on the management and human resource aspects of their job.

### **Invest in Education of County Board Supervisors (Improvement)**

The County Board currently consists of several new Supervisors brought on during the onset of the COVID pandemic, and during the planning process they recognized the need for both initial and on-going education on a variety of topics.

#### Tactics:

- Formalize an on-boarding process for newly elected Supervisors, including:
  - Creation of a mentor program partnering tenured Supervisors with new Supervisors.
  - Intentional subject area expertise growth. Proactively bring topics to the board to encourage research and learning in individual supervisors who can then bring back information to share with the whole board. Grow institutional knowledge.
  - Hold informal meetings with outgoing Supervisors and their successors to facilitate knowledge transfer.
  - Fund new Supervisors' attendance at annual Wisconsin Counties Association training or conferences.
  - Create on-boarding folder, expectations of supervisors
- Support the attendance by new Supervisors at major Committee meetings, such as attending Finance Committee meetings during the annual budget development process. Create a mechanism to share agendas with all County Board Supervisors in order to facilitate this.
- Support cross-training, collaboration, and peer learning between County Board Supervisors and their counter parts on the boards of outside partners, such as peer county boards, Neighborhood Services of Southwest Wisconsin, Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program, Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board.
- Conduct annual on-going training covering basic concepts of local government, such as the role of counties, county government finances, the role of county boards, elections, and departmental work.

### **Deepen Staff Training in Leadership and Management (Improvement)**

County staff frequently have the opportunity to attend conferences specific to their department. However, further training in management, leadership, and process improvement was identified as a potential growth area.

#### Tactics

- Sponsor department head training targeted at leadership and management, including Lean process training or UW Continuing Education certifications in Public Management or Human Resources.
- Ensure conference attendance and professional development is aligned with the goals of the Strategic Plan.
- On-going training or education targeted at the evaluation, adoption, and implementation of new technology to improve operational efficiency.
- Educate employees on how government works and the need for teamwork and partnership within county departments
- Create a culture of sharing information and learning from peer counties.

### **Transparency (Improvement)**

- All committee/boards have folders with all meeting materials on iPads
- Meeting materials listed on county website for all meetings
- Listserv to automatically send agendas to whoever wants to be informed
- All committees/boards are recorded and up on website

### **Growth**

Economic development and population growth must remain a priority if the county is going to reverse the projected population decline and workforce shortages. Maintaining the funding for the Economic Development Director partnership with Richland Center is critical to this effort. The following strategies are intended to reflect the county’s community and economic development priorities.

#### **Maintain investment in Workforce and Community Development**

Demographic projections and input from county employers reflect a dire need to grow the overall population, with an emphasis on the workforce attraction. Without a growth in workforce population, there will continue to be significant challenges to business attraction and retention. There will also be limitations on the county’s school enrollment and tax base.

#### Tactics:

- Prioritize new home construction, and development of incentives or programs to attract developers using smart growth concepts. Smart growth planned economic and community development that attempts to curb urban sprawl and worsening environmental conditions.
- Encourage improvements to existing property to increase attractiveness
- Support workforce development initiatives directed at attracting new residents.
- Support and invest in broadband expansion throughout the county.
- Identify financially sustainable use options for the UW Richland campus.
- Continue to invest in community and economic development partnerships with a demonstrated return-on-investment.

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:50 PM

**Deleted:** in the event the current relationship ceases.

#### **Support Business Attraction and Retention**

In addition to the workforce attraction, the county must prioritize tax base growth through business attraction and expansion.

#### Tactics:

- Develop a portfolio of incentives to support business growth.
- Identify priority areas in the county for future industrial, commercial, or residential development.
- ~~Identify future land uses for county or municipal-owned land informed by economic opportunities and~~

environmental constraints.

## Improve County Identity and Marketing

The greatest unrealized potential for Richland County is the ability to capitalize on its distinctive beauty. Leveraging this asset for growth will support many of the strategies and tactics listed elsewhere in this plan.

### Tactics:

- Collaborate with county partners in the development of a distinctive brand for Richland County that will serve to build a sense of identity and pride, and help attract new residents and tourists.
- Create a new website that improve the county's digital presence, and serves both an effective governmental function as well as serving as an attractive "front door" to the world for new businesses, residents, and tourists looking to discover the county.
- Capitalize on the county's natural beauty and recreational opportunities through the investment and marketing of county parks, campgrounds, and recreational opportunities.

## Operational Performance Metrics

Implementation of the strategies and tactics above will result in measured improvement to county operations. Some of this improvement is already being measured and has existing targets. Other improvements require the development of targets and collection of baseline data. Recommended performance metrics are below and summarized in Appendix A.

- Meet the 2018 salary schedule commitments for county staff.
- Achieve and maintain a general fund balance equal to 25% of annual operating expenses.
- Maintain the existing Investment Grade rating for the county's general obligation debt, with improvement from A3 across a 5-year period.
- Request annual return on investment reports from funded partners, and monitor to ensure ROI is steady or growing across multiple year periods.
- Develop baseline data on turnover, resulting in a turnover rate and major reasons for staff turnover.
- Increase non-tax revenue as a portion of overall revenue, supported by grants and fees.
- Create a new website.
- Increase the number of county residents with high-speed internet.
- Create a distinct Richland County brand and marketing platform targeted at tourists and workforce.

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:53 PM

**Comment [5]:** Remove section and place directly into workplan under relevant section

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:53 PM

**Comment [6]:** Already have rec plan

Melissa Luck 5/27/2021 12:53 PM

**Deleted:** <#>Develop of a county recreation plan to guide investment. .

## Chapter 3: Capital Facilities

County capital improvement needs pose a significant burden to the county's budget due to borrowing limits, debt service that impacts operations, and the competition between investments in mandatory and discretionary facilities. This puts the county in a position to choose between providing funding mandatory services or committed discretionary expenses.

This chapter identifies proximate objectives for large investment decisions, and offers guidance on how to maintain progress over time. It does not identify solutions to all the county's investment challenges, since many of these require information not yet available.

*Proximate objective: an accomplishment that the organization is going after right now, and which is close enough at hand to be feasible and achievable*

*- Richard Rumelt, Good Strategy / Bad Strategy*

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:27 PM

**Comment [1]:** Change paragraph to stronger statement on what are priorities are, put in order of priority

### Statutorily Required Services

These projects are fully integrated into the core purpose of the county, and essential for supporting the effective delivery of mandatory services.

#### County Jail and Sheriff's Office

The current jail is out of compliance with Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) administrative code, and puts the county at risk from action by DOC inspectors. The Sheriff's department continues to manage in this space and can currently perform their duties, however it's clear that action is needed to address the compliance issues.

**Risk of not investing:** Failure to comply with DOC requirements may eventually result in a shut-down of the jail.

##### Existing Options:

- Renovate and expand the existing facility – Studies published in 2013 include a Space Needs Assessment Report, Facility Condition Report, and Concept Design Synopsis and cost for the entire courthouse (Appendix C). These reports identified several structural issues with the existing building, and developed schematic plans for renovation and expansion of this facility at a cost of \$12.85 million, of which \$6.24 million was associated with the Sheriff's office and jail. This estimate *excluded* relocation costs for staff and inmates.
- Construction of a new facility – This option would require approximately 6-8 acres of land and put the county in competition with other land use demands such as business growth and housing development. This option would also require the county to consider how to reuse the existing facility. Construction of a new facility may provide partnership opportunities to co-locate other services in either the new facility or the renovated courthouse.

**Estimated cost:** Conservative estimates range from \$12.85 million to renovate and \$20 million for new construction.

**Proximate objective:** Make a determination in the next three years whether to construct a new facility or renovate the existing facility. Include an analysis of partnership opportunities in a new facility or in the vacated existing space. Also include an analysis of available land suitable for use as a jail.

#### County-wide Emergency Radio Towers

A consultant is currently studying this project, and expected to complete their work in May. These towers are considered critical since they provide support to emergency services. Partnerships may exist to help fund this.

##### Risk of not investing:

- Inability to call for backup.
- Delayed response calls.

**Estimated cost:** \$3.2-7.7 million.

**Proximate objective:** Further action will come once the study is complete in May.

#### Emergency Services Facility

Planning is underway to co-locate county emergency management services with the Richland Center Ambulance Garage.

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:30 PM

**Comment [2]:** Tie to workplan with deadlines

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:08 PM

**Deleted: Mandated**

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:30 PM

**Comment [3]:** Reference statutes

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:23 PM

**Comment [4]:** Re-arrange jail to last education

Melissa Luck 6/14/2021 2:22 PM

**Comment [5]:** Need to put in work plan deadline for plan and deadline for making decision

Melissa Luck 6/24/2021 6:20 PM

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**Comment [6]:** should we be having a discussion about not doing the ambulance garage and making it a part of possible jail build

Risk of not investing:

- Barriers to hiring due to the poor overnight facilities currently provided.

Estimated cost: The estimated expense to the county is \$600,000.

Proximate objectives:

- Begin discussion and analysis on the potential re-use opportunities for vacated space in the county courthouse.

### Highway Improvement

- Develop plan for maintenance that needs to be done in order to save money in long run.
- Take data already have for road status and create plan that includes costs to implement yearly plan

### Discretionary Services

The county needs to make hard decisions regarding its future discretionary spending. The project summaries below provide a series of decision-points and proximate objectives as guides to forward progress on these issues. In making decisions, the county should consider the following:

Priorities:

- Prioritize services based on county need and fiscal impact, reducing, or eliminating services as needed.
- Protect assets from disuse or disrepair to ensure long-term options remain available.
- Reduce expenses and capital investments to bare essentials during the decision-making process.

Core Values:

- Integrity – honor commitments and partnerships, even during planning for change.
- Focus on the future, planting seeds for long-term successes.
- Invest in necessary, non-mandatory services when the private market cannot support the service.

### UW Richland

The County Board and county and city residents have expressed the desire for a continued post-secondary educational opportunity in the county. For this to occur, the county will need to take clear steps to work with its existing partner, while exploring other options in case the current arrangement terminates.

Goals:

- Improve the county's position relative to its relationship with the Board of Regents/UW Platteville, and its ability to make decisions about county property.
- Reduce or remove the risk that the county will unprepared for a potential closure of the UW Richland branch.
- Determine with some certainty, the probability that a UW Richland Campus will exist in two years.
- Develop scenarios for the use of these buildings in the event the relationship with UW system ends. Including a potential partnership with SWTC
- Protect the county's investment in the UW Campus facilities through selective capital improvement investments, while halting all non-urgent capital improvements until a long-term use is determined.
- Advocate to have UW-Richland to be an independent campus not satellite .
- Get county out of Food Service

Constraints and opportunities based on the current lease (Appendix D):

- ~~The current lease extends through June 30, 2042, and "terminates automatically" if appropriations by the~~

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**Comment [7]:** •remove sand shed because already being done. Want to add create plan for highway improvement.

Melissa Luck 6/23/2021 10:22 AM

**Deleted:** Salt / Sand Shed . ... [1]

legislature are insufficient to permit the continued operation, or if state legislation concerning higher education in Wisconsin involves a fundamental change in the branch campus program.

- In case of termination, the lease shall be turned over to some educational organization or to the Federal, State, or local Government.
- The county is required to pay for utilities (except phone service), as well as repairs and building improvements, and is in a position to choose which investments should be made based on the long-term future use of the campus.
- All furnishings were provided by the Board of Regents. Ending the agreement with the Board of Regents would require removal or disposal of these furnishings, and would require the next user to provide their own furnishings unless an agreement could be reached with the Board of Regents.
- The county agrees to pay 50% of janitorial costs. Should the agreement end, the county would need to budget for 100% of these costs.

Proximate objectives:

- Separate decisions about the agricultural land from decisions about the buildings. Currently the UW system is leasing the agricultural land to a farmer, taking the profit for their use. County control of this land would provide revenue and opportunities to explore other uses.
- Determine reality and feasibility of UW remaining active on the campus. Push for candid, continual conversations. Discussions with UW should include:
  - A request for the strategy to increase enrollment at the UW Richland campus, including recruitment strategies, target populations, and distinct areas of study.
  - Options for student housing.
- Develop scenarios for alternative use of the buildings to reduce vacancy time in the event the campus closes.
- Establish a capital improvements plan for these facilities, targeted at minimal maintenance needed to keep the buildings viable until a long-term use is determined.

### Symons Recreation Center

The Symons Recreation Center appears to have community support and a history of partnerships to support operations. During the planning process, some questioned whether the county needed to own and subsidize this facility or if it could continue on its own under a different ownership and operational plan.

Goals:

- Maintain break-even, or net-positive return on county operational and capital funding.
- Maintain facilities to ensure they stay relevant, modern, and distinct from other recreational facilities in the city.
- Evaluate the long-term liability to the county resulting from capital investments or expansion plans.

Proximate objectives:

- Evaluate whether this service could be successful if owned and managed by other partners, and make plans to divest county of ownership of this facility.
- Evaluate the impact of expansion plans future on capital and operational expenses and the county's bond rating.
- Consider assisting with marketing and membership if it can assist with the transfer of ownership.

### Tri-County Airport

There was general support for maintaining the airport due to its return on investment to the county. The partnership with Sauk County also provides significant return on investment in the form of payroll from employers using the airport, with minimal investment in the facility relative to overall operational cost. The most urgent issue is to develop a flood remediation plan for the airport to ensure its continued viability.

Goals:

- Reduce or eliminate flood risk to the airport, hangers, and other facilities.

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Comment [8]: we aren't paying this???

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Comment [9]: Are we paying this?

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Comment [10]: may need to add language about county paying the employee discount



- Ensure the long-term viability of this asset to support county economic development efforts.
- Develop an evaluation process to monitor continued return on investment to the county.

Proximate objective:

- Pursue flood remediation grant funding in partnership with Sauk County.

### Pine Valley Community Village

The county completed a significant renovation and expansion in 2016, making an intentional long-term investment in this facility. Support remains strong for the services provided by Pine Valley. It was noted during the planning process that the county ownership of a nursing home informed the 2018 downgrade of county general obligation rating to A3 from A2 (Appendix A).

Goals:

- Protect the county's investment through funded maintenance of an on-going capital investment plan funded by Pine Valley revenues.
- Monitor return on investment of the facility, and have revenue cover 50% of debt service tied to the 2016 improvements as per the terms of bond sale 3/1/2016.
- Develop a process for evaluating future demand, adjusted for impacts to healthcare funding, population growth, and demographic changes in the county.
- Evaluate whether management, financial, or operational changes could occur to reduce the impact of owning and operating this facility on the county's bond rating.

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### Capital Facilities Performance Metrics

The county must evaluate its investments in discretionary enterprises and services to ensure it can maintain existing commitments and funding for mandatory services. Given this position, traditional performance metrics have been substituted for a summary of the proximate objectives listed above. These should serve as a guide to ensure the county continues forward progress, and they should be updated as new objectives become clear.

- Mandated facilities:
  - Jail and Sheriff's Office:
    - Determine whether the existing jail will be renovated and expanded, or if a new jail is optimal.
    - Develop a timeline for the next proximate objective to be complete, such as development of a remodel / renovation budget and timeline, or identification and acquisition of land for a new jail.
  - Emergency Services Building – prioritize timing for the construction.
  - Radio Towers – prioritize timing for the construction.
  - Salt/sand shed – identify site location, cost, and construction deadline.
- Discretionary facilities:
  - UW Richland Campus:
    - Gain control of the agricultural land and determine a long-term use for this land.
    - Acquire a 2-year plan from the UW system outlining how they will make this campus sustainable.
    - Develop scenarios for a post-UW use for the buildings.
    - Develop a minimum capital improvement plan.
  - Tri-County Airport – Secure funding to address the flooding that impacts operations at the airport.
  - Symons Center:
    - Define a distinctive service provided by Symons, compared to city facilities.

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**Comment [11]:** we need to create goal that uses comparison metrics with other counties on each task-how are we performing compared to other counties.

- Evaluate whether operations of this service could be managed by a private or non-profit entity, and progress towards divesting county ownership.
- Determine long-term liability impacts of facility expansion plans.
- Determine the annual return-on-investment for the facility, including capital investments.
- Pine Valley – Continue to monitor return-on-investment and funding needs.

DRAFT

# Chapter 1: Opportunities and Challenges Strategic Plan Framework

Strategic planning is the process by which leaders of an organization determine what it intends<sup>[1]</sup> to be in the future and how it will get there. A strategic plan serves as a community's roadmap and is used to prioritize initiatives, resources, goals, and department operations and projects. Strategic planning helps your local government realize its long-term vision by setting up goals and objectives in a systematic, incremental manner. Simply put, it makes you take a look at what's going on today, where you want to be tomorrow and which steps you will need to take to get there<sup>[2]</sup>.

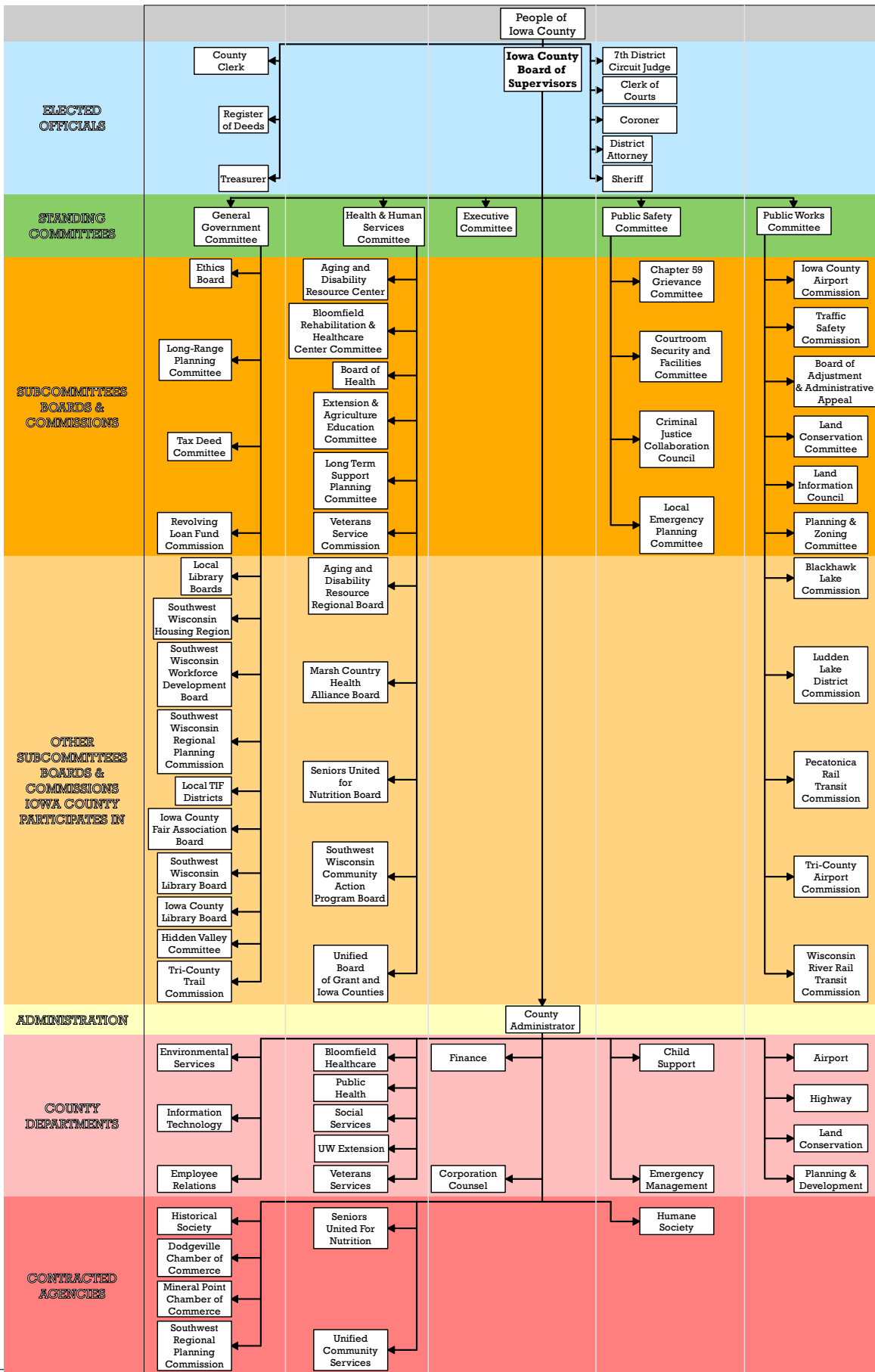
During early 2021, the Richland County Board of Supervisors participated in four strategic planning conversations, facilitated by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held via Zoom. Meetings were open to the public, and invitees included all 21 members of the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator.

The schedule and topics were as follows:

- January 27 – Core values, stakeholders, mission, and vision
- February 10 – Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and Political, Economical, Social and Technological (PEST) analyses and development of strategic initiatives<sup>[3]</sup>
- February 24 – Organizational capability and goal development
- March 10 – Capital facility investments and plan implementation

SWWRPC also conducted one-on-one interviews with individuals who provided additional input into county issues. Citizen and municipal insight was also acquired through community planning work running concurrent to the strategic planning process. All materials for these meetings are retained in the SWWRPC office and available upon request<sup>[4]</sup><sup>[5]</sup>.

Figure 1. Organizational Chart of Richland County Administration and Government



## Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities will address the challenges ~~mentioned above~~ identified in this plan, and form the basis for ~~actions~~ recommended actions. in this plan.

- **Effectiveness** – *Implement operational efficiencies* to reduce the costs and free up revenue.
- **Growth** – Work to *increase the county's population and tax base* fund services in a balanced manner. Richland County must find a balance between infrastructure, workforce, housing and population.
- **Focus** – ~~Scale back or eliminate discretionary services that cannot provide sustainable revenue to cover their costs.~~ Evaluate our discretionary services in order to focus resources on providing services with sustainable revenue.
- **Improvement** – *Create a culture of continual improvement* to sustain progress. Tasks that bring in younger families to live and work in Richland County.

## Framework for Decision-Making

The county will have to make several hard decisions in the coming years, and it's beyond the ability of this document to detail each step in that process. However, it ~~will~~ can serve as a guide during the decision-making process. Prioritizing future investments should be informed by the following criteria.

### Core Values

The county's *practices must be tethered to its principles* if it is to have some coherent strategy moving forward. Core values form the basis for decisions, since they bind decision-makers to their decisions. The County Board provided the following core values during the planning process:

- **Integrity** – Engage in county work with honesty and transparency in all proceedings. Meet commitments. Value the multitude of experiences on the board and the diversity of opinions this brings to decision-making.
- **Public Service** – Serve the county professionally and with competence. Be efficient and objective in decision-making. Focus on doing work that is relevant to both current and future generations of county residents.
- **Accountability** – Assume ownership of decisions. Be diligent and follow-through on projects. Be responsive to the needs of county residents as a whole, while recognizing the intrinsic value of every person. Make decisions that plant seeds of success for the future.
- **Open-minded** – Govern in a collaborative manner, unbiased by personal interest. Listen to the needs of residents, while being aware of future demands on county services.

### Mission and Vision

~~The following Mission and Vision statements were drafted during the Strategic Planning process. Due to the nature of current challenges facing the county,~~

**Mission:** Richland County will think strategically and anticipate the future, ensuring that the decisions made today will have lasting value and provide fiscal solvency. The needs of individuals will be respected while recognizing responsibility to the community as a whole. Vital community involvement in decision-making is encouraged by providing a venue for citizens who care to contribute to the betterment of the county.

Alternate Mission Statement: Richland County will foster a stable and adequate tax base such that services to the community are financially sound. With this base, the county will strive to continually improve its wisest use of tax revenues to provide services for the common good.

**Vision:** Richland County will be a leader for resilient vibrant rural counties and a place where people love life, enjoy work, and are empowered to raise thriving families.

Alternate Vision Statement: To achieve a resilient local economy where housing, jobs and population are in balance, and natural resources and amenities are preserved such that Richland county is a good place to live now and far into the future.

## Focus<sup>[7]</sup>

~~The defining problem for the Richland County Board of Supervisors is the need to choose which services and enterprises it will financially support. Continuing inherited practices and commitments challenge the ability to plan for future commitments and needs.~~ The county must focus its efforts on the needs of the future.

*"The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do."*

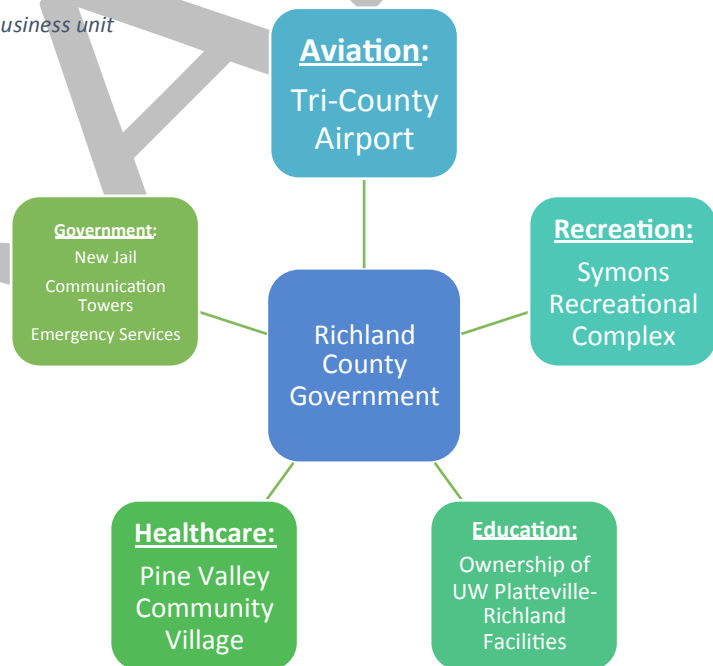
*- Michael Porter, "What is Strategy?"*

The current challenge stems from several factors outside of the county's control, including:

- Stagnating population growth, evidence for which is found in census data, population projections, school enrollment trends, and reports on the county's bond rating (Appendix B).
- State-imposed levy and debt limits.
- Inherited contractual agreements and investments for discretionary enterprises and services.

## The "Business" of the County<sup>[8]</sup>

Figure 1 – Richland County Long-term capital needs by business unit



The primary causes of the county's financial issues stem from an inability to make hard choices and focus its efforts through intentional action. It must choose which discretionary services to abandon, while simultaneously investing in community and economic development efforts to grow its population and tax base. Failure to focus will result in budget deficits, inability to pay competitive wages, and deferred maintenance of critical functions and facilities.

In addition to its ~~government-statutory~~ function, Richland County is currently in the "business" ~~aviation, recreation, healthcare, and education~~ Tri-county Airport, Symons, Pine Valley and UW Platteville-Richland by way of its support or ownership of facilities used in these sectors (Figure 1). Maintenance debt services expenditures associated with discretionary enterprises compete for the same levy funding as statutorily required ~~mandatory~~ services, and impact the county's ability to fully fund its core operations.

~~• thriving families.~~

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*"At the core, strategy is about focus, and most complex organizations don't focus their resources. Instead, they pursue multiple goals at once, not concentrating enough resources to achieve a breakthrough in any one of them"*

- Richard Rumelt, Good Strategy/Bad Strategy

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## Considerations

When facing difficult decisions, the county ~~will should~~ answer the following questions to prioritize investments:

- For each discretionary enterprise, ask the question: *If we weren't already doing this, would we start doing it today?*
- What action or objective is within the county's *sphere of control*?
- What is the next *proximate advantage* that will allow the county to make progress towards a larger goal?
- What is the *economic return to the tax payer* associated with this project?
- What is the *social or public good* associated with this project, and *would it cease to exist* if funding was cut?
- Are services able to be effectively *provided by another* party or organization?
- *Is the service we're providing mandated*, and if so, *is the means of service provision mandated*? If the means of service provision is not mandated, *is there a more effective way of providing the service*?
- Is the project *a lever for creation of additional value or resources*, or *an impediment to service and innovation*?
- How might the county *premeditate actions of other parties* in order to improve its position?
- For discretionary enterprises, *are both the operational and capital outlays affordable over the next 20 years*?

## Chapter 2: Strategic Goals Operations<sup>[4]</sup>

The County Board made significant strategic decisions in 2019 when they created the positions of County Administrator and Economic Development Director. Recommendations in this chapter build on those initial investments and include projects that were indirectly set in motion as a result of the choice to transition the executive branch of government from an Administrative Coordinator to a County Administrator<sup>[2]</sup>.

### Organizational Structure<sup>[3]</sup>

The following strategies will enable the county to find operational efficiencies, thereby freeing up revenue and capacity in the form of staff time.

#### Streamline Organizational Structure (Effectiveness)

Continue the path that began with the creation of the County Administrator, using this position to centralize and coordinate county operations whenever possible.

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*Quality of a service or product is not what you put into it, but what the customer gets out of it.*

*- Peter Drucker*

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##### Tactics:

- Create county wide organizational chart
- Centralize common county-wide processes and systems under the County Administrator.
  - Create finance, HR and maintenance department
- Improve the county's procurement process to be consistent county-wide. Maximize procurement rewards or benefits and identify joint procurement opportunities across departments or with other organizations.
  - Improve purchasing policy
- Purchase a payroll program that is ~~Coordinate upgrades to the payroll process so it's~~ uniform for employees across all departments or enterprises.

#### Improve Financial Practices (Effectiveness)

Implement the following tactics to improve the county's financial accountability, strategy, and flexibility. Doing so will yield improvements in financial education and also help create a baseline for performance metrics.

##### Tactics:

- Improve the county's bond rating by targeting improvement opportunities identified in Moody's Rating Action of February 2020 and Rating Change of March 2018 (Appendix B).
- Improve the budget process to implement flexibility, strategic thinking, accountability, and implementation of the Strategic Plan. Specific actions include:
  - Create budget narratives summarizing how new initiatives or improvements implement the Strategic Plan.
  - Define value that could be added with 20% *more* funding, or lost due to a 20% *reduction* in funding.
  - Identify cuts that would not impact strategic planning goals or mandated-statutorily required services.
  - Identify how departments would respond to unexpected cuts or events<sup>[4]</sup>.
- Develop a capital improvement plan inclusive of facilities, roads, and equipment.
- Analyze the county's indirect rate to capture highest possible amount of grant funding, and establish a metric for productivity and efficiency.
- Increase discretionary and variable revenue source (fines, fees, grants, etc.) as a portion of the overall budget.

#### Increase Coordination (Effectiveness)

The county and its municipalities have many over-lapping interests, offering a good opportunity for partnerships that



may result in improved service delivery or an overall savings to county residents through efficiencies.

#### Tactics:

- Engage in joint procurement materials and equipment whenever possible.
- Engage in joint contracting for capital projects to find savings resulting from reduced mobilization fees, increased competitive bidding, etc. (e.g. mowing, paving, road systems, snow plowing),
- Explore opportunities to share or contract staffing services.
- Create additional and modern methods to communicate events and initiatives, and to generate direct input from the community. This could include community engagement via a new website or a social media presence.
- Coordinate community develop and land use decision-making in Richland Center among institutional partners such as Richland County, Richland Center, Richland Hospital, and Richland Local School District.

## **Workforce (Growth)**

~~County employees are knowledge workers whose value is grounded in the information that enables them to do their job.~~ The county's ability to provide quality services, ~~therefore~~, relies entirely on the attraction and retention of knowledgeable, hard-working employees, and the continued acquisition and effective transfer of knowledge.

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*"We should work to increase the desirability of being a Richland County employee."*

*- David Turk, Richland County Board Supervisor*

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## **Improve employee Pay and HR Policies**

The financial cost of turnover is usually minimal compared to the hidden cost of lost productivity during the resulting transition. For this reason, retention of quality employees should be a primary focus to ensure the consistent delivery of high-quality services.

#### Tactics:

- Obtaining market value for employee wages as determined through the county's current 2018-wage study.
- Give annual pay increases
- MonitorDevelop thea compensation and classification system for all positions to ensure positions remain market-competitive (public and private sectors).
- Develop a uniform performance evaluation process that includes annual reviews, 6-month check-ins, and exit interviews.
- Develop a uniform set of human resources policies and procedures to improve transparency and accountability throughout the organization, including an update to the employee handbook and other related documents.

## **Develop a culture of support for employees (Improvement)**

Non-monetary compensation is also critical to employee retention, since it builds organizational culture that supports employees. There are several ways the county can support these initiatives.

#### Tactics:

- Celebrate success and the professional and personal achievements of employees. Recognize new hires, retirements, and year-of-service milestones. Build a culture that supports and celebrates its people.
- Enable and empower departments to develop celebratory or team-building events. Day-long departmental retreats or other benefits can help build culture at a minimal expense.
- Create a total benefits program for employees that highlights total compensation and investment of the county in its employees, inclusive of salary, fringe benefits, wellness, and professional development.
- Increase vacation time for new employees.
- Evaluate flexible work schedules.

## **Prioritize Service over Staffing (Improvement)**

Prior to refilling a vacant position, the county should evaluate workforce needs through the lens of the service being delivered, not the means of service delivery, and implement the most effective means of service provision.

#### Tactics:

- For each unmet existing service or new service being proposed, evaluate staffing needs using the following analysis:
  - How does current staffing compare to peer counties.
  - Can we *Build*? – invest in learning and development required to train staff to provide the service.
  - Should we *Buy*? – post the position, offering market-rate pay for a competitive application process.
  - Is there opportunity to *Borrow*? – collaborate with other entities on cost-sharing this position, or contract it out to a consultant for a short-period.
  - Can you *Bridge* the gap? –fill a vacant position through an intentional succession planning process.
  - Should we *Stop* providing this service or position?

### **Capacity (Effectiveness)**

Capacity, specifically the education and training of the Richland County Board and staff to perform their duties, was a common theme during the planning process. Many newer members wanted further education on various aspects of their job. Staff were commended for their subject-matter knowledge, with further training recommendations focusing on the management and human resource aspects of their job.

### **Invest in Education of County Board Supervisors (Improvement)**

The County Board currently consists of several new Supervisors brought on during the onset of the COVID pandemic, and during the planning process they recognized the need for both initial and on-going education on a variety of topics.

#### Tactics:

- Formalize an on-boarding process for newly elected Supervisors, including:
  - Creation of a mentor program partnering tenured Supervisors with new Supervisors.
  - Intentional subject area expertise growth. Proactively bring topics to the board to encourage research and learning in individual supervisors who can then bring back information to share with the whole board. Grow institutional knowledge.
  - Hold informal meetings with outgoing Supervisors and their successors to facilitate knowledge transfer.
  - Fund new Supervisors' attendance at annual Wisconsin Counties Association training or conferences.
  - Create on-boarding folder, expectations of supervisors
- Support the attendance by new Supervisors at major Committee meetings, such as attending Finance Committee meetings during the annual budget development process. Create a mechanism to share agendas with all County Board Supervisors in order to facilitate this.
- Support cross-training, collaboration, and peer learning between County Board Supervisors and their counterparts on the boards of outside partners, such as peer county boards, Neighborhood Services of Southwest Wisconsin, Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program, Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board.
- Conduct annual on-going training covering basic concepts of local government, such as the role of counties, county government finances, the role of county boards, elections, and departmental work.

### **Deepen Staff Training in Leadership and Management (Improvement)**

~~County staff frequently have the opportunity to attend conferences specific to their department. However, further~~

training in management, leadership, and process improvement was identified as a potential growth area.

#### Tactics

- Sponsor department head training targeted at leadership and management, including Lean process training or UW Continuing Education certifications in Public Management or Human Resources.
- Ensure conference attendance and professional development is aligned with the goals of the Strategic Plan.
- On-going training or education targeted at the evaluation, adoption, and implementation of new technology to improve operational efficiency.
- Educate employees on how government works and the need for teamwork and partnership within county departments
- Create a culture of sharing information and learning from peer counties.

### **Transparency (Improvement)**

- All committee/boards have folders with all meeting materials on iPads
- Meeting materials listed on county website for all meetings
- Listserv to automatically send agendas to whoever wants to be informed
- All committees/boards are recorded and up on website

### **Growth**

Economic development and population growth must remain a priority if the county is going to reverse the projected population decline and workforce shortages. Maintaining the funding for the Economic Development Director partnership with Richland Center is critical to this effort. The following strategies are intended to reflect the county's community and economic development priorities.

#### **Maintain investment in Workforce and Community Development**

Demographic projections and input from county employers reflect a dire need to grow the overall population, with an emphasis on the workforce attraction. Without a growth in workforce population, there will continue to be significant challenges to business attraction and retention. There will also be limitations on the county's school enrollment and tax base.

#### Tactics:

- Prioritize new home construction, and development of incentives or programs to attract developers using smart growth concepts. Smart growth planned economic and community development that attempts to curb urban sprawl and worsening environmental conditions.
- Encourage improvements to existing property to increase attractiveness
- Support workforce development initiatives directed at attracting new residents.
- Support and invest in broadband expansion throughout the county.
- Identify financially sustainable use options for the UW Richland campus ~~in the event the current relationship ceases.~~
- Continue to invest in community and economic development partnerships with a demonstrated return-on-investment.

#### **Support Business Attraction and Retention**

In addition to the workforce attraction, the county must prioritize tax base growth through business attraction and expansion.

#### Tactics:

- Develop a portfolio of incentives to support business growth.
- Identify priority areas in the county for future industrial, commercial, or residential development.
- Identify future land uses for county or municipal-owned land informed by economic opportunities and environmental constraints.

## Improve County Identity and Marketing

The greatest unrealized potential for Richland County is the ability to capitalize on its distinctive beauty. Leveraging this asset for growth will support many of the strategies and tactics listed elsewhere in this plan.

### Tactics:

- Collaborate with county partners in the development of a distinctive brand for Richland County that will serve to build a sense of identity and pride, and help attract new residents and tourists.
- Create a new website that improve the county’s digital presence, and serves both an effective governmental function as well as serving as an attractive “front door” to the world for new businesses, residents, and tourists looking to discover the county.
- Capitalize on the county’s natural beauty and recreational opportunities through the investment and marketing of county parks, campgrounds, and recreational opportunities.

## Operational Performance Metrics<sup>[5]</sup>

Implementation of the strategies and tactics above will result in measured improvement to county operations. Some of this improvement is already being measured and has existing targets. Other improvements require the development of targets and collection of baseline data. Recommended performance metrics are below and summarized in Appendix A.

- Meet the 2018 salary schedule commitments for county staff.
- Achieve and maintain a general fund balance equal to 25% of annual operating expenses.
- Maintain the existing Investment Grade rating for the county’s general obligation debt, with improvement from A3 across a 5-year period.
- Request annual return on investment reports from funded partners, and monitor to ensure ROI is steady or growing across multiple year periods.
- Develop baseline data on turnover, resulting in a turnover rate and major reasons for staff turnover.
- Increase non-tax revenue as a portion of overall revenue, supported by grants and fees.
- Create a new website<sup>[6]</sup>.
- ~~Develop of a county recreation plan to guide investment.~~
- Increase the number of county residents with high-speed internet.
- Create a distinct Richland County brand and marketing platform targeted at tourists and workforce.

## Chapter 3: Capital Facilities

County capital improvement needs pose a significant burden to the county's budget due to borrowing limits, debt service that impacts operations, and the competition between investments in mandatory and discretionary facilities. This puts the county in a position to choose between providing funding mandatory services or committed discretionary expenses.

This chapter identifies proximate objectives for large investment decisions, and<sup>[1]</sup> offers guidance on how to maintain progress over time. It does not identify solutions to all the county's investment challenges, since many of these require information not yet available.

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*Proximate objective: an accomplishment that the organization is going after right now, and which is close enough at hand to be feasible and achievable*

*- Richard Rumelt, Good Strategy / Bad Strategy*

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### **Mandated Statutorily Required Services<sup>[2]</sup>**

These projects are fully integrated into the core purpose of the county, and essential for supporting the effective delivery of mandatory services<sup>[3]</sup>.

#### **County Jail and Sheriff's Office<sup>[4]</sup>**

The current jail is out of compliance with Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) administrative code, and puts the county at risk from action by DOC inspectors. The Sheriff's department continues to manage in this space and can currently perform their duties, however it's clear that action is needed to address the compliance issues.

Risk of not investing: Failure to comply with DOC requirements may eventually result in a shut-down of the jail.

Existing Options<sup>[5]</sup>:

- Renovate and expand the existing facility – Studies published in 2013 include a Space Needs Assessment Report, Facility Condition Report, and Concept Design Synopsis and cost for the entire courthouse (Appendix C). These reports identified several structural issues with the existing building, and developed schematic plans for renovation and expansion of this facility at a cost of \$12.85 million, of which \$6.24 million was associated with the Sheriff's office and jail. This estimate *excluded* relocation costs for staff and inmates.
- Construction of a new facility – This option would require approximately 6-8 acres of land and put the county in competition with other land use demands such as business growth and housing development. This option would also require the county to consider how to reuse the existing facility. Construction of a new facility may provide partnership opportunities to co-locate other services in either the new facility or the renovated courthouse.

Estimated cost: Conservative estimates range from \$12.85 million to renovate and \$20 million for new construction.

Proximate objective: Make a determination in the next three years whether to construct a new facility or renovate the existing facility. Include an analysis of partnership opportunities in a new facility or in the vacated existing space. Also include an analysis of available land suitable for use as a jail.

#### **County-wide Emergency Radio Towers**

A consultant is currently studying this project, and expected to complete their work in May. These towers are considered critical since they provide support to emergency services. Partnerships may exist to help fund this.

Risk of not investing:

- Inability to call for backup.
- Delayed response calls.

Estimated cost: ~~\$1~~-~~23.2~~-~~7.7~~ million.

Proximate objective: Further action will come once the study is complete in May.

#### **Emergency Services Facility<sup>[6]</sup>**

Planning is underway to co-locate county emergency management services with the Richland Center Ambulance Garage.

#### Risk of not investing:

- ~~• Some delays in response time.~~
- Barriers to hiring due to the poor overnight facilities currently provided.

Estimated cost: The estimated expense to the county is \$600,000.

#### Proximate objectives:

- ~~• Finalize partnership with the city on land availability, facility design, etc.~~
- Begin discussion and analysis on the potential re-use opportunities for vacated space in the county courthouse.

## **Highway Improvement**

- Develop plan for maintenance that needs to be done in order to save money in long run.
- Take data already have for road status and create plan that includes costs to implement yearly plan

## **Salt / Sand Shed**

~~Preliminary planning is underway for this structure. There is a recognized need for additional storage and preparation for winter operations, but no current impacts to service have been identified.~~

#### Risk of not investing:

- ~~• Potential groundwater impacts from leaking and failure of the old structure.~~
- ~~• Loss of material from leaking.~~

Estimated cost: Approximately \$300,000.

Proximate objectives: Determine site, design, and cost [7]

## **Discretionary Services**

The county needs to make hard decisions regarding its future discretionary spending. The project summaries below provide a series of decision-points and proximate objectives as guides to forward progress on these issues. In making decisions, the county should consider the following:

#### Priorities:

- Prioritize services based on county need and fiscal impact, reducing, or eliminating services as needed.
- Protect assets from disuse or disrepair to ensure long-term options remain available.
- Reduce expenses and capital investments to bare essentials during the decision-making process.

#### Core Values:

- Integrity – honor commitments and partnerships, even during planning for change.
- Focus on the future, planting seeds for long-term successes.
- Invest in necessary, non-mandatory services when the private market cannot support the service.

## **UW Richland**

The County Board and county and city residents have expressed the desire for a continued post-secondary educational opportunity in the county. For this to occur, the county will need to take clear steps to work with its existing partner, while exploring other options in case the current arrangement terminates.

#### Goals:

- Improve the county's position relative to its relationship with the Board of Regents/UW Platteville, and its ability to make decisions about county property.
- Reduce or remove the risk that the county will unprepared for a potential closure of the UW Richland branch.

- Determine with some certainty, the probability that a UW Richland Campus will exist in two years.
- Develop scenarios for the use of these buildings in the event the relationship with UW system ends. Including a potential partnership with SWTC
- Protect the county's investment in the UW Campus facilities through selective capital improvement investments, while halting all non-urgent capital improvements until a long-term use is determined.
- Advocate to have UW-Richland to be an independent campus not satellite .
- Get county out of Food Service

#### Constraints and opportunities based on the current lease (Appendix D):

- The current lease extends through June 30, 2042, and “terminates automatically” if appropriations by the legislature are insufficient to permit the continued operation, or if state legislation concerning higher education in Wisconsin involves a fundamental change in the branch campus program.
- In case of termination, the lease shall be turned over to some educational organization or to the Federal, State, or local Government.
- The county is required to pay for utilities (except phone service), [8] as well as repairs and building improvements, and is in a position to choose which investments should be made based on the long-term future use of the campus.
- All furnishings were provided by the Board of Regents. Ending the agreement with the Board of Regents would require removal or disposal of these furnishings, and would require the next user to provide their own furnishings unless an agreement could be reached with the Board of Regents.
- The county agrees to pay 50% of janitorial costs. Should[9] the agreement end, the county would need to budget for 100% of these costs.

#### Proximate objectives:

- Separate decisions about the agricultural land from decisions about the buildings. Currently the UW system is leasing the agricultural land to a farmer, taking the profit for their use. County control of this land would provide revenue and opportunities to explore other uses.
- Determine reality and feasibility of UW remaining active on the campus. Push for candid, continual conversations. Discussions with UW should include:
  - A request for the strategy to increase enrollment at the UW Richland campus, including recruitment strategies, target populations, and distinct areas of study.
  - Options for student housing.
- Develop scenarios for alternative use of the buildings to reduce vacancy time in the event the campus closes.
- Establish a capital improvements plan for these facilities, targeted at minimal maintenance needed to keep the buildings viable until a long-term use is determined.

## **Symons Recreation Center**

The Symons Recreation Center appears to have community support and a history of partnerships to support operations. During the planning process, some questioned whether the county needed to own and subsidize this facility or if it could continue on its own under a different ownership and operational plan.

#### Goals:

- Maintain break-even, or net-positive return on county operational and capital funding[10].
- Maintain facilities to ensure they stay relevant, modern, and distinct from other recreational facilities in the city.
- Evaluate the long-term liability to the county resulting from capital investments or expansion plans.

#### Proximate objectives:

- Evaluate whether this service could be successful if owned and managed by other partners, and make plans to divest county of ownership of this facility.



- Evaluate the impact of expansion plans future on capital and operational expenses and the county’s bond rating.
- Consider assisting with marketing and membership if it can assist with the transfer of ownership.

## Tri-County Airport

There was general support for maintaining the airport due to its return on investment to the county. The partnership with Sauk County also provides significant return on investment in the form of payroll from employers using the airport, with minimal investment in the facility relative to overall operational cost. The most urgent issue is to develop a flood remediation plan for the airport to ensure its continued viability.

### Goals:

- Reduce or eliminate flood risk to the airport, hangers, and other facilities.
- Ensure the long-term viability of this asset to support county economic development efforts.
- Develop an evaluation process to monitor continued return on investment to the county.

### Proximate objective:

- Pursue flood remediation grant funding in partnership with Sauk County.

## Pine Valley Community Village

The county completed a significant renovation and expansion in 2016, making an intentional long-term investment in this facility. Support remains strong for the services provided by Pine Valley, ~~and no new action is recommended~~. It was noted during the planning process that the county ownership of a nursing home informed the 2018 downgrade of county general obligation rating to A3 from A2 (Appendix A).

### Goals:

- Protect the county’s investment through funded maintenance of an on-going capital investment plan funded by Pine Valley revenues.
- Monitor return on investment of the facility, and ~~determine the ability of have~~ revenue ~~ee to also~~ cover 50% of debt service tied to the 2016 improvements as per the terms of bond sale 3/1/2016.
- Develop a process for evaluating future demand, adjusted for impacts to healthcare funding, population growth, and demographic changes in the county.
- Evaluate whether management, financial, or operational changes could occur to reduce the impact of owning and operating this facility on the county’s bond rating.

## Capital Facilities Performance Metrics<sup>[11]</sup>

The county must evaluate its investments in discretionary enterprises and services to ensure it can maintain existing commitments and funding for mandatory services. Given this position, traditional performance metrics have been substituted for a summary of the proximate objectives listed above. These should serve as a guide to ensure the county continues forward progress, and they should be updated as new objectives become clear.

- Mandated facilities:
  - Jail and Sheriff’s Office:
    - Determine whether the existing jail will be renovated and expanded, or if a new jail is optimal.
    - Develop a timeline for the next proximate objective to be complete, such as development of a remodel / renovation budget and timeline, or identification and acquisition of land for a new jail.
  - Emergency Services Building – prioritize timing for the construction.
  - Radio Towers – prioritize timing for the construction.
  - Salt/sand shed – identify site location, cost, and construction deadline.
- Discretionary facilities:



- UW Richland Campus:
  - Gain control of the agricultural land and determine a long-term use for this land.
  - Acquire a 2-year plan from the UW system outlining how they will make this campus sustainable.
  - Develop scenarios for a post-UW use for the buildings.
  - Develop a minimum capital improvement plan.
- Tri-County Airport – Secure funding to address the flooding that impacts operations at the airport.
- Symons Center:
  - Define a distinctive service provided by Symons, compared to city facilities.
  - Evaluate whether operations of this service could be managed by a private or non-profit entity, and progress towards divesting county ownership.
  - Determine long-term liability impacts of facility expansion plans.
  - Determine the annual return-on-investment for the facility, including capital investments.
- Pine Valley – Continue to monitor return-on-investment and funding needs.

DRAFT

## Richland County Committee

### Agenda Item Cover

**Agenda Item Name:** Strategic Initiatives impacting future county budgets

<b>Department</b>	Administration	<b>Presented By:</b>	Administrator
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	September 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2021	<b>Action Needed:</b>	Vote
<b>Disclosure:</b>	Open Session	<b>Authority:</b>	Resolution No. 21-101
<b>Date submitted:</b>	August 30 <sup>th</sup> 2021	<b>Referred by:</b>	
<b>Action needed by no later than (date)</b>	N/A	<b>Resolution</b>	<u>N/A</u> , prepared, reviewed

**Recommendation and/or action language:**

Motion to incorporate into the strategic plan, “financial recommendations on initiatives impacting future county services and expenditures” which may result in recommendations to the board to evaluate solvency and/or separate with non-mandated services.

**Background:** *(preferred one page or less with focus on options and decision points)*

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As the Strategic Planning Committee determines its scope of planning and topics it hopes to address in developing the strategic financial plan. It is proposed that the committee entertain recommending evaluation of none-mandated, discretionary services and possibly recommend evaluations and separations of services in context of continual budget constraints, growing deferred capital improvements, and increased costs to operate mandated services.

Attached are draft resolution examples that may be considered in directing services to find solvency or separating from county control. The first Draft depicts language to study and present a plan of solvency, the second draft depicts a separation from county control. Both examples are drafts and can be amended to best meet desires of the board and features of the department or services.

**Attachments and References:**

Resolution Concept Draft: Investigate a Solvent Financial Plan - Below	Resolution Concept Draft: Prepare for Separation from the County

**Financial Review:**

*(please check one)*

<input type="checkbox"/>	In adopted budget	Fund Number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apportionment needed	Requested Fund Number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other funding Source		
<input type="checkbox"/>	No financial impact		

*(summary of current and future impacts)*

May impact future budget expenditures and impact American Rescue Plan funding apportionments.

**Approval:**

**Review:**

*Clinton Langreck*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Head

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator, or Elected Office (if applicable)

## Richland County Committee

### Agenda Item Cover

— Resolution Concept **Draft:** Investigate a Solvent Financial Plan —

Whereas the Strategic Planning Committee was tasked to “continue the development of the Strategic Plan and create a final plan for presentation to the County Board by the end of 2021” under authority of Resolution No. 21-101, and

Whereas the Richland County’s recent borrowing practices, audit reports and budgeting constraints have consistently indicated a need for the county to prioritize services and begin evaluation and displacement of non-mandated services impacting operational levy and debt-service levy expenditures, and

Whereas the County has received numerous petitions and concerns in regarding the elimination, reduction, or disposition of highly valued none-mandated services and recognizes the importance of these services to the community.

Now therefore be it resolved the Richland County Board of Supervisors directs the following actions and timelines to be implemented in efforts to evaluate the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment), and to plan for operating without impacts on the county operations levy and debt service levy:

1. The Richland County Structure Resolution depicting committee, boards and commission’s duties and authorities is hereby amended to include the following bullet: “The \_\_\_\_\_oversite (committee, board or commission) is tasked to work in conjunction with the County Administrator and supporting staff to evaluate the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) and determine the best way, if at all possible, to continue services with zero future dependency on the county operational levy and debt-service levy for capital improvements beginning in 2023.”
2. The County administrator is authorized to allocate to the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) \$\_\_\_\_\_ dollars in American Rescue Plan funding to study and develop a credible, County Board adopted, business plan (operation agreement, partnership agreement, etc.) that reasonably ensures solvent revenue generating operations that result zero future dependency on county operational levy or debt service levy for capital improvements beginning in 2023.

Be it further resolved that if such a plan is not adopted by the with County Board no later than 16 Aug 2022, that the County Administrator is tasked with dissolving the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, by eliminate county funding, releasing necessary staff, preparing necessary policy changes, and appropriating or liquidating all assets, grounds, equipment and facilities in the best interest of the county.

## Richland County Committee

### Agenda Item Cover

— Resolution Concept **Draft:** Prepare for Separation from the County —

Whereas the Strategic Planning Committee was tasked to “continue the development of the Strategic Plan and create a final plan for presentation to the County Board by the end of 2021” under authority of Resolution No. 21-101, and

Whereas the Richland County’s recent borrowing practices, audit reports and budgeting constraints have consistently indicated a need for the county to prioritize services and begin evaluation and displacement of none-mandated services impacting operational levy and debt-service levy expenditures, and

Whereas the County has received numerous petitions and concerns regarding the elimination, reduction or displacement of highly valued none-mandated services and recognizes the importance of these services to the community.

Now therefore be it resolved the Richland County Board of Supervisors directs the following actions and timelines to be implemented in the separation of the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) from Richland County control, funding and liability effective January 1st 2023.

Be it further resolved the Richland County Structure Resolution depicting committee, boards and commission’s duties and authorities is hereby amended to include the following bullet: “The \_\_\_\_\_ oversight (committee, board or commission) is tasked to work in conjunction with the County Administrator and supporting staff to plan the discontinuation of the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) effective January 1st 2023, with elimination of county levy funding, separation of staff, development of necessary policy changes and separation procedures, and disposition or liquidating of all assets, grounds, equipment and facilities in efforts to maintain services if feasible and aligning with the best interest of the county”,

Be it further resolved the County administrator is authorized to allocate to the \_\_\_\_\_ department \_\_\_\_\_ (provided services, grounds, facilities and equipment) \$\_\_\_\_\_ dollars in American Rescue Plan to assist in solvency during the transition out from county control, if services will be continued under another legal entity.

Be it further resolved a plan of separation from county control and future disposition of services will be presented to the Richland County Board no later than 16 Aug 2022.

RE: Pilot Response to Strategic Priorities and Core Values questionnaire

1. What functions and services, if any, is your department performing that do not align with these strategic priorities and core values?

It is my opinion that all of the functions and service provide by both the ambulance service and the emergency management office align with the strategic priorities and core values. This is especially true with Effectiveness (*Implement operational efficiencies to reduce the costs and free up revenue*), Growth (*Work to increase the county's population and tax base fund services in a balanced manner*) and Improvement (*Create a culture of continual improvement to sustain progress*).

The core values listed are the very same core values I try to instill in both the departments I oversee. You can see the correlation with the listed core values and the ambulance service's mission statement; *The mission of the Richland County Ambulance Service is to provide efficient, high quality emergency medical care and safe transportation to a medical facility for any resident or visitor of our service area. We will commit to being a public education resource on issues pertaining to emergency care and preventive medicine. We will create a safe work environment that encourages continuing education and the achievement of personal goals while continually striving to accomplish our primary mission. By working together and remaining well organized, committed to quality, active participation and continuous improvement, we can best meet the challenges of the future.*

2. What operations, or procedure changes would you plan on implementing to help your functions and projects better align with these strategic priorities and core values?

This question's response requires a multi-layer response which will show a connection to the listed strategic priorities and core values – particularly Improvement, Public Service and Open-minded. I will start out with the Ambulance Service as it appears to be the department most people are interested in at this time. I will also touch on Emergency Management as I feel it has a great impact on the growth of the County.

The County Ambulance Service has long been the topic of discussion and for anyone paying attention the service of providing pre-hospital care is a hot-topic throughout the Country. Questions and issues such as funding, sustainable delivery model (volunteer vs. paid on-call vs. career), **who is responsible responsibility** of ownership (private vs. public) and growing staff shortage across the Country. Improvement - Improving our processes will be key for the Ambulance Service's survival and embracing change will be necessary for the sustainable delivery of services. Public Service - As mentioned earlier, the Ambulance Service has been the topic of many conversations over the last 10 years. Some feel that the County should not be running an ambulance service and should create a district; others feel we are filling a gap that was created in 1968 when Wisconsin first adopted an official plan for the delivery of pre-hospital care and the transport of the sick and injured. State Statute does not clearly identify who is responsible for ambulance services with the exception of State Statute 60.565 which reads 60.565 Ambulance service. The town board shall contract for or operate and maintain ambulance services unless such services are provided by another person. If the town board contracts for ambulance services, it may contract with one or more providers. The town board may determine and charge a reasonable fee for

ambulance service provided under this section. The town board may purchase equipment for medical and other emergency calls. The Statute allows the County to operate an ambulance service as stated in Statute 59.54(1) - 59.54 Public protection and safety.

(1) Ambulances. The board may purchase, equip, operate and maintain ambulances and contract for ambulance service with one or more providers for conveyance of the sick or injured and make reasonable charges for the use thereof. There is also the recent case between Portage County, who provides ambulance services, and the Town of Grant. Here is an excerpt from the case: *County home rule under s. 59.03 (1) allows every county to “exercise any organizational or administrative power, subject only to the constitution and to any enactment of the legislature.” The language of s. 60.565 authorizing towns to provide ambulance service acknowledges that another person can provide the ambulance service instead of a town and withdraws the mandate when another person provides ambulance services. The absence of a command from the legislature that towns provide an ambulance service in all situations causes the argument that county home rule prevents counties from providing ambulance service to miss the mark. Town of Grant, Portage County v. Portage County, 2017 WI App 69, 378 Wis. 2d 289, 903 N.W.2d 152, 16-2435.*

Most have no idea about the issues facing EMS nor do they concern themselves too much with who owns or operates the ambulance service. They do care about whether or not an ambulance shows up when 911 is called and they expect highly trained individuals to arrive in said ambulance within a reasonable amount of time and provide life-saving care and efficient, safe transportation. EMS is an essential service but does not get the funding support or attention as other essential services such as fire protection, highways, trash removal and police protection. I suppose it is because EMS is a part of the healthcare system and thus the burden is covered by the individual needing the service whereas the whole community relies on good roads, timely trash pick-up and patrol cars protecting the neighborhoods as being essential to everyone. This leads me to the core value of being open-minded. Open-mindedness must be exercised by the County Board, the municipalities, the ambulance directors, the providers and the public. Questions such as ~~would~~ “who should provide the service (district vs. County)” need to be made with all the facts being presented and not on past ~~wrongs-thoughts~~ or feelings. Ironically, the County does have the ability to levy taxes for EMS services where a district does not necessarily unless that district was formed before the levy rule changes from years ago. There are currently 7 ambulance services with 13 ambulance providing service to the County residents and visitors. Is this efficient? Could there be a better model that reduces the number of ambulances and stations, yet provides a higher level of care? Could this occur by forming a County-wide district or the County taking over ambulance services for the entire County? One fact is for sure: the current model is not sustainable as volunteers are few and far between. Recently 2 ambulance services in the northern part of the County hosted a well-advertised open-house in an attempt to attract new members; no one showed up. There is another ambulance service in the southern part of the County that has 5 EMTs and 3 EMRs. Three of their members are retirement age and have stated they will not renew their license in 2023; right now, they are not able to respond to every 911 without calling for back up or mutual aid. I share this not to ridicule or shame any service but to shed light on an issue that needs to be addressed. This won't get solved by the County getting out of the ambulance business or a district being formed, because we will all still be vying for the two resources every ambulance service in the County needs; funding and people. It is bigger than that and will require intentional open-mindedness with the goal of

an improved system. This system must ~~that~~ meets the needs of all County residents, be ~~is~~ effectively run and ensures the service will be available for generations to come.

Emergency Management is a mandated service, and in Richland County we barely meet the mandated requirements of the programs due to a decreasing budget to meet the financial impact of personnel costs, so providing discretionary services isn't an option. The same core values that are applied and promoted within the ambulance service are also embraced in the emergency management office. However the one core value that is especially important in emergency management is Public Service. Mitigation and preparedness are actions that provide value in the now and in the future. How we respond to natural disasters will impact how communities thrive after the disaster is over. An effective program affords the director to put all their attention to mitigation, planning and recovery and this often requires some pretty ingenious out-the-box thinking to pull off, especially since over the years the operating budget has been reduced to cover the cost of health insurance, staff, or pay increases. This must change and just as I need-am asked to embrace effectiveness as a strategic goal, the County must embrace an open-mind approach as it prioritizes the services it provides. Maybe there needs to be money added to the operational cost of the program? Maybe the department needs a full-time director that can put all of their attention and energy towards building resiliency in communities and look for more mitigation opportunities? One thing is for certain we must be open-minded if we are to balance here in Richland County.

Albert Einstein once quoted "We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them". I believe if we adopt the idea behind this quote we will be better equipped mentally to find solutions to the problems of today and make tomorrow be better for those who come after us.

# FW: Department Response to proposed Strategic Priorities and Values

Tracy Thorsen

Tue 8/31/2021 2:50 PM

To: Clinton Langreck <clinton.langreck@co.richland.wi.us>; Ingrid Glasbrenner <ingrid.glasbrenner@co.richland.wi.us>;

 1 attachment

Letter on pilot priorities and values.pdf;

Below are my responses to the questions that were posed related to the County's strategic priorities and core values.

**1. What functions and services, if any, is your department performing that do not align with these strategic priorities and core values**

I do not believe that there are any functions or services that do not align with the strategic priorities and core values. The HHS mission and practices align with the County's strategic priorities and core values. There are many operational activities and initiatives that HHS is conducting that I think are consistent with these priorities and values.

**2. What operations or procedure changes would you plan on implementing to help your functions and projects better align with these strategic priorities and core values?**

There are various operations/procedural efforts that HHS continues to focus on in order to improve our effectiveness and adapt to the health and human service needs of the community. For example, HHS continues to focus on improving our ability to capture revenue sources that can fully or partially fund programs and services in order to minimize the amount of tax levy required.

- There have been efforts to improve financial practices by addressing the need for better data. Health and Human Services is in our second year of implementing a time tracking software application and changing the associated procedures in order to more closely track how staff divide their time between programs. Better time tracking improves our ability to claim revenues that cover the costs of services. The next steps will be to integrate the payroll timesheet into this time tracking application and then to pursue other electronic record systems to gain further efficiencies.
- Other processes have been and continue to be implemented in order to maintain and improve coordination between service staff and fiscal staff to assure available funding is claimed in a timely manner.
- The County's financial software system does not easily provide the types of reports that would be helpful for identifying trends and conducting projections. HHS would advocate being involved when the system is upgraded or replaced in order to provide input and assure that it will meet the needs of our department.

I hope that my responses are helpful. If this is an exercise that committee would like to implement across all departments, it may be helpful to ask more targeted questions. I struggled with how detailed I should be in outlining efforts that could be tied to County's strategic priorities and core values.

**Tracy Thorsen, LCSW**

Director

*(pronouns: she/her/hers)*





Richland County Health & Human Services  
Phone: 608 649 5935 | Fax: 608 647 6611  
[tracy.thorsen@co.richland.wi.us](mailto:tracy.thorsen@co.richland.wi.us)



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**From:** Clinton Langreck  
**Sent:** Monday, August 23, 2021 8:58 AM  
**To:** Adam Hady <adam.hady@wisc.edu>; Tracy Thorsen <tracy.thorsen@co.richland.wi.us>; Darin Gudgeon <darin.gudgeon@co.richland.wi.us>  
**Cc:** Ingrid Glasbrenner <ingrid.glasbrenner@co.richland.wi.us>; Melissa Luck <melissa.luck@co.richland.wi.us>  
**Subject:** Department Response to proposed Strategic Priorities and Values

Good Morning Selected Departments,

In the August 16<sup>th</sup> 2021 organizational meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee the committee undertook the review and development of establishing strategic priorities and core values (as listed below). The committee took action to have a few piloted departments review these priorities and values and respond to them by answering the following two questions:

1. What functions and services, if any, is your department performing that do not align with these strategic priorities and core values?
2. What operations, or procedure changes would you plan on implementing to help your functions and projects better align with these strategic priorities and core values?

Context:

Strategic planning is the process by which leaders of an organization determine what it intends to be in the future and how it will get there. A strategic plan serves as a community's roadmap and is used to prioritize initiatives, resources, goals, and department operations and projects. Strategic planning helps your local government realize its long-term vision by setting up goals and objectives in a systematic, incremental manner. Simply put, it makes you take a look at what's going on today, where you want to be tomorrow and which steps you will need to take to get there.

During early 2021, the Richland County Board of Supervisors participated in four strategic planning conversations, facilitated by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held via Zoom. Meetings were open to the public, and invitees included all 21 members of the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator.

The schedule and topics were as follows:

- January 27 – Core values, stakeholders, mission, and vision

- February 10 – SWOT and PEST analyses and development of strategic initiatives
- February 24 – Organizational capability and goal development
- March 10 – Capital facility investments and plan implementation

SWWRPC also conducted one-on-one interviews with individuals who provided additional input into county issues. Citizen and municipal insight was also acquired through community planning work running concurrent to the strategic planning process. All materials for these meetings are retained in the SWWRPC office and available upon request.

#### Strategic Priorities:

The following strategic priorities form the basis for actions recommended in this plan.

**Effectiveness** – Implement operational efficiencies to reduce the costs and free up revenue.

**Growth** – Work to increase the county’s population and tax base fund services in a balanced manner. Richland County must find a balance between infrastructure, workforce, housing, and population.

**Focus** – Evaluate, prioritize, and scale back or eliminate discretionary services in order to focus resources on providing services with sustainable revenue or which generate measurable community wealth.

**Improvement** – Create a culture of continual improvement to sustain progress.

#### Core Values:

The county’s practices must be tethered to its principles if it is to have some coherent strategy moving forward. Core values form the basis for decisions, since they bind decision-makers to their decisions. The County Board provided the following core values during the planning process:

**Integrity** – Engage in county work with honesty and transparency in all proceedings. Meet commitments. Value the multitude of experiences on the board and the diversity of opinions this brings to decision-making.

**Public Service** – Serve the county professionally and with competence. Be efficient and objective in decision-making. Focus on doing work that is relevant to both current and future generations of county residents.

**Accountability** – Assume ownership of decisions. Be diligent and follow-through on projects. Be responsive to the needs of county residents as a whole, while recognizing the intrinsic value of every person. Make decisions that plant seeds of success for the future.

**Open-minded** – Govern in a collaborative manner, unbiased by personal interest. Listen to the needs of residents, while being aware of future demands on county services

If you have any questions please reach out to me at [clinton.langreck@co.richland.wi.us](mailto:clinton.langreck@co.richland.wi.us) or 608-475-0009. Please have your final responses submitted to Chair Glasbrenner @ Ingrid Glasbrenner [ingrid.glasbrenner@co.richland.wi.us](mailto:ingrid.glasbrenner@co.richland.wi.us) with CC to Administrator Langreck no later

than Tuesday, August 31<sup>st</sup> 2021, in anticipation for our next Strategic planning meeting on Thursday September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1pm. Thank you for your participation in this project.

Sincerely,

Clinton Langreck  
County Administrator

CC: Chair Ingrid Glasbrenner, Tracy Thorsen, Darin Gudgeion, Adam Hady

Clinton Langreck  
County Administrator

Richland County  
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