

Resolution No: 14-05-13-46
2015-2017 Strategic Plan
Williamson County, Illinois
(Adopted May 13, 2014)

In January 2009, the Williamson County Board initiated a strategic planning process to ensure the County's future financial stability and to properly prioritize major issues. The Williamson County Board is again continuing to do strategic planning and is enacting a (2015 – 2017) strategic plan. To accomplish a successful strategic plan, the County Board has identified fourteen key projects the County is focusing its energies and resources on over the next three years. This strategic plan will be reviewed annually, prior to each budgeting process, prioritizing pertinent issues for the coming year and to keep County Board members on track to achieve the key projects.

All County Board members will participate in this process to help achieve the overall goals of the County. Plan updates as needed will be discussed by the Board to gauge progress and preserve accountability.

Williamson County Government will be more effective, efficient, adaptable and innovative with the support of the County Board and the establishment of this Strategic Plan.

There are three important factors driving the need for a fresh look at all aspects of County government. These factors are (1) the changes in the demographics of Williamson County's population; (2) the changes in the growth patterns within Williamson County; and (3) the changes in Williamson County Government's finances. This plan responds to these changes and the challenges they present. The plan was developed after an intensive process of consulting with a wide variety of leaders both inside and outside of County Government.

Vision Statement

The Strategic Plan includes a vision statement and guiding principles to help maintain focus on long-term goals. During its strategic planning process, Williamson County identified the vision of where we want to be by creating a vision statement:

Williamson County, Illinois is a growing County that has to balance growth with the costs of growth. Our collective goal is to have our residents live in a safe community absent fiscal waste. Our County has partnered and will

continue to partner with other communities in order to provide a diverse local economy with job opportunities and to provide efficient and excellent services.

Mission Statement

County government is mandated to perform certain services; these services must be considered when each Project or Policy within Williamson County Government is identified. By adhering to its plan, the core business improves and provides better services to its citizens. The mission of Williamson County is to ensure that:

Williamson County Government remains fiscally sound and continues to provide core County services in a cost-effective manner. The County has a quality workforce and an engaged citizenry. The County is a regional leader.

Completion of the strategic plan is not the end of the process. It is the beginning. Once the strategic plan is complete, the County Board, countywide elected officials, and staff will be implementing the plan's recommendations and merging it with the budgeting process. This will allow the County Board and senior staff to formulate annual work plans for each component of County government that are designed to achieve each of the goals that are set by the Board, within the revenue policies that are adopted. This process helps delineate the respective goals of the Board and the staff, and it allows for much greater accountability, performance measurement, and quality governance.

The key projects Williamson County is focusing its energies and resources on through 2015-2017 are:

- 1) Develop formalized policies and procedures in the employment related areas of:
 - Negligence
 - Impropriety
 - Embezzlement
 - Certificate of Insurance Verification Checks on all Vendors
 - Terminations
 - EFT Disclaimer
 - Equipment, Internet & Network Usage

- 2) Develop and implement a new County Employee Handbook.
- 3) Develop and implement County drug policies that addresses:
 - Drug & Alcohol Use/Abuse
 - Drug Testing Consent form
 - Sample Drug Testing Policy
 - Workplace Drug Testing Policy and Procedure
- 4) Develop formalized policies and procedures in the financial related areas of:
 - Debt management plan
 - Capital improvement plan
 - Budget practices and policies
 - Reserve funds spending policies
 - Review the County's grant management policy
- 5) Modernization of Assessor's property record system.
- 6) Review land development opportunities to determine if the County can participate.
- 7) Review the County Buildings' security to determine adequacy and safety of staff and the general public.
- 8) Review the establishment of a County building permit.
- 9) Establish a savings reserve for the General Fund in the amount of \$1,500,000.
- 10) Eliminate the IMRF negative balance for the IMRF SLEP Enhancement Reserve thereby eliminating the 7.5% interest rate charged on the negative balance.
- 11) Establish a uniform employee attendance record keeping policy.
- 12) Review Recycling and Waste Management Ordinance and revise landfill tipping fees to be current with today's standards.
- 13) Join the Local Debt Recovery Program.

- 14) Installation and integration of video 1st appearance equipment for court system.
- 15) Continued work with child advocacy programs for distribution of grant funds.
- 16) Redesign the County's fixed asset reporting network.
- 17) Establishment of a priority road clearance schedule in times of inclement weather for school bus routes.
- 18) Review the location of the Animal Control office.
- 19) Implementation of a County-wide drug assistance card.

At the beginning of each year, the County Board will review the previous year's accomplishments as they relate to the Strategic Plan and then establish the next set of agenda items for the current year. These annual agenda items advance us toward maintaining financial stability. Once the items have been identified, they are divided into top, high or moderate priority.

To achieve the County's mission as stated above, actions and policies that address these issues must be implemented over the next several years. Priorities for these issues were recommended during the information-gathering phase of the process. There are three important points to keep in mind regarding priorities for implementing this strategic plan:

- 1) **All of the issues listed are considered priorities.** The issues are generally listed in the priority order established through all sources of input and as refined by the County Board. However, it should be noted that the precise order of priority is not as important as the general recognition of importance.
- 2) **Williamson County Government's role in addressing these issues will vary.** County government is not expected to be solely responsible for all of the issues described in this plan, but is expected to play a role in each of them. The nature of our involvement may change with the implementation of the strategic plan.
- 3) **Many of these strategic issues are interdependent.** Interdependence means that addressing one of these issues may affect

others, and it also means the priorities as identified may be flexible and subject to change as the plan is implemented.

The following priorities have been identified for 2015-2017:

Top Priority

- Develop formalized policies and procedures in the employment related areas of:
 - Negligence
 - Impropriety
 - Embezzlement
 - Certificate of Insurance Verification Checks on all Vendors
 - Terminations
 - EFT Disclaimer
 - Equipment, Internet & Network Usage

- Develop and implement a new County Employee Handbook.

- Develop and implement County drug policies that addresses:
 - Drug & Alcohol Use/Abuse
 - Drug Testing Consent form
 - Sample Drug Testing Policy
 - Workplace Drug Testing Policy and Procedure

- Develop formalized policies and procedures in the financial related areas of:
 - Debt management plan
 - Capital improvement plan
 - Budget practices and policies
 - Reserve funds spending policies
 - Review the County's grant management policy

- Modernization of Assessor's property record system.

- Review land development opportunities to determine if the County can participate.
- Review the County Buildings' security to determine adequacy and safety of staff and the general public.
- Establish a savings reserve for the General Fund in the amount of \$1,500,000.
- Eliminate the IMRF negative balance for the IMRF SLEP Enhancement Reserve thereby eliminating the 7.5% interest rate charged on the negative balance.
- Establish a uniform employee attendance record keeping policy.
- Join the Local Debt Recovery Program.

High Priority

- Installation and integration of video 1st appearance equipment for court system.
- Continued work with child advocacy programs for distribution of grant funds.
- Redesign the County's fixed asset reporting network.
- Establishment of a priority road clearance schedule in times of inclement weather.
- Review the location of the Animal Control office.
- Implementation of a County-wide drug assistance card.

Moderate Priority

- Review the establishment of a County Building Permit.
- Continue update of Solid Waste Plan.

Project Objectives

Projects cannot be adequately achieved without establishing objectives to concentrate on and accomplish as stepping stones toward completing each project. Therefore, Williamson County Government identified specific objectives as guidance for itself. These objectives are aims that guide our actions and better ensure successful execution of the Strategic Plan.

Project 1: Develop Employment Policies and Procedures

Top Objectives:

- Adopt Negligence Policy
- Adopt Impropriety Policy
- Adopt Embezzlement Policy
- Certificate of Insurance Verification Checks on all Vendors
- Adopt Terminations Policy
- Adopt EFT Disclaimer
- Adopt Equipment, Internet & Network Usage

Results for the Public:

- Assures compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Standards and Government Auditing Standards.
- Can assist in mitigating workers compensation and general liability claims and expenses.

Project 2: Develop and implement a new County Employee Handbook

Top Objectives:

- Adopt and implement a new County Employee Handbook.

Results for the Public:

- Assures that County staff members are properly informed of the County's policies and procedures.
- Can assist in mitigating workers compensation and general liability claims and expenses.

Project 3: Develop and implement County drug policies

Top Objectives:

- Adopt Drug & Alcohol Use/Abuse Policy
- Adopt Drug Testing Consent form
- Adopt Sample Drug Testing Policy
- Adopt Workplace Drug Testing Policy and Procedure

Results for the Public:

- Can assist in ensuring that appropriate staff members are employed by the County.
- Can assist in mitigating workers compensation and general liability claims and expenses.

Project 4: Develop Financial Policies and Procedures

Top Objectives:

- Adopt a debt management plan
- Adopt a capital improvement plan
- Adopt budget practices and policies
- Adopt reserve funds spending policies
- Review the County's grant management policy and make any necessary revisions

Results for the Public:

- Assures compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Standards and Government Auditing Standards.
- These policies will assist in increasing the transparency of County Government to its citizens.
- These polices will assist the County in providing for a financial sound future.

Project 5: Modernization of Assessor's property record system.

Top Objectives:

- Provide the necessary staff and materials to modernize the Assessor's property record system. It is estimated that 3 digital

cameras and 2 summer staff members will be needed to implement the modernization plans.

Results for the Public:

- Property records, including the property index cards would be available in electronic form for citizens to access.
- Recent pictures would be on file so that assessment information is as current as possible.

Project 6: Review land development opportunities in the County

Top Objectives:

- Review the land development opportunities in the County to determine if the County can play a role in future developments.

Results for the Public:

- Land developments can lead to either an increase in job or housing opportunities.
- The County's revenues could increase and the County could increase its services that are offered to County residents.

Project 7: Review building security

Top Objectives:

- Review all County Buildings' security policies and procedures to determine if security is adequate for the current needs.

Results for the Public:

- Buildings will be safer and secure for all members of the public.

Project 8: Review the establishment of a County building permit

Top Objectives:

- Review status of current County Building Permit structure.
- Review surrounding Counties' and Municipalities' building permit structures.
- Review statutory authority for County Building Permit.
- Review allowable and acceptable permit fee structure(s).

- Review appropriate implementation dates.

Results for the Public:

- Improve regulation on structures built within the County.
- Improve County data for assessment purposes.
- Assist taxpayers in achieving uniform building codes.
- Establish additional revenue stream for the County.

Project 9: Establish General Fund Reserve - \$1,500,000

Top Objectives:

- Establish reserve in the event of cash flow interruption.
- Establish funds in a separately maintained bank account.
- Ensure funds are interest bearing.
- Establish policies for accessing and utilizing reserves.

Results for the Public:

- Assures compliance with Government Auditing Standards Statement No. 54.
- Assists the County in meeting its obligations in times of interrupted cash flows.
- Assures the public that the services offered by the County can continue uninterrupted.

Project 10: Eliminate the IMRF SLEP Enhancement Reserve Deficit

Top Objectives:

- Eliminate the IMRF negative balance for the IMRF SLEP Enhancement Reserve thereby eliminating the 7.5% interest rate charged on the negative balance.
- Reduce the County's employer contribution rate.

Results for the Public:

- This will result in a tax savings for the County residents if the County can eliminate the balance that is being assessed interest and over time reduce the County's IMRF rate.

Project 11: Establish a uniform employee attendance record keeping system

Top Objectives:

- Establish uniform rules and procedures for absent staff
- Improve collected data
- Establish a uniform appointed official absence policy
- Establish support for uncompensated absences balance
- Increased accountability for staff members

Results for the Public:

- Increased accountability for staff members

Project 12: Review Recycling and Waste Management Ordinance and revise landfill tipping fees

Top Objectives:

- Review and understand the current Recycling and Waste Management Ordinance.
- Meet with current landfill developers to understand progress to date and future plans of landfill.
- Update the Recycling and Waste Management Ordinance to be current with most up-to-date statutory language and standards.
- Establish a tipping fee structure with landfill management.

Results for the Public:

- Compliance with state law regarding Recycling and Waste Management.
- Establish local cooperation with company management.
- Establish a revenue source for the County.

Project 13: Join the Local Debt Recovery Program

Top Objectives:

- To find another avenue to collect past due fines and fees due to the County.
- To improve revenue streams for the County.
- To assist the court system in collecting past due fines and fees.

Results for the Public:

- Increased revenue streams can mitigate the County's dependence on real estate taxes.
- Those committing crimes in Williamson County pay the court ordered fines and fees.

Project 14: Installation and integration of video 1st appearance equipment for the court system

Top Objectives:

- To improve court services.
- To improve options for out-of-county prisoners.
- To improve safety by not having to transport prisoners from one jurisdiction to another.

Results for the Public:

- Lower costs due to decreased transportation costs.
- Increased public safety by not transporting prisoners from one jurisdiction to another.

Project 15: Continued work with child advocacy programs for distribution of grant funds

Top Objectives:

- To provide assistance to Williamson County based child advocacy programs.
- To provide necessary assistance to abused and neglected children.

Results for the Public:

- The County's children will be better represented in the local court system.
- The County's children will be better protected by these agencies being able to offer more services to them.

Project 16: Redesign the County's fixed asset reporting network

Top Objectives:

- To keep an accurate listing of the County's fixed assets for grant purposes and insurance purposes.
- To improve accountability for County-purchased assets.
- To better understand the future fixed asset needs of the County.

Results for the Public:

- Increased accountability of public funds being used to purchase fixed assets.
- Increased transparency to the public regarding the funds used to purchase fixed assets.

Project 17: Establishment of a priority road clearance schedule in times of inclement weather for school bus routes

Top Objectives:

- To establish a priority road clearance schedule in times of inclement weather that incorporates the County's schools' bus schedules.
- To increase safety when taking the County's children home in times of inclement weather.

Results for the Public:

- Increased safety when taking the County's children home in times of inclement weather.
- Increased awareness to the taxpayers regarding routes taken during inclement weather.
- Increased awareness to the taxpayers regarding the order of road clearance in times of inclement weather.

Project 18: Review the location of the Animal Control Department

Top Objectives:

- To review the location of the Animal Control Department to determine if either improvements to the current facility or relocation of the current facility would enhance County services.

- To determine the most cost effective approach to enhancing animal control services.

Results for the Public:

- As the County is growing, so is the animal population. Animal control is an important public safety issue to address for the County's citizens.
- Increased cost effectiveness of the animal control department could reduce the cost to the citizens.

Project 19: Implementation of a County-wide drug assistance card

Top Objectives:

- To establish a beneficial program that offers discounts on prescription drugs to County residents, regardless of age, income or insurance coverage, to assist with the high cost of prescription drugs.
- To make the general public aware of the prescription drug assistance program.

Results for the Public:

- Decreased costs for prescription drugs when using the card.

Goals

The goals of this strategic plan apply specifically to Williamson County Government and Williamson County residents. Our goals of implementing this strategic plan are:

- 1) To improve communications with and engage our residents, businesses, municipalities and other organization within Williamson County.
- 2) To improve the effectiveness of County government by partnering with others.
- 3) To respond with innovation to the historic changes in Williamson County and the surrounding region.
- 4) To provide leadership that promotes a strong region.

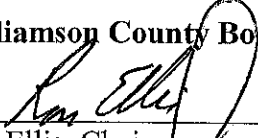
The importance of the implementation phase of the strategic planning process cannot be overstated. As important as follow-through on implementation is, it has also often been said that implementation is the most difficult part of the strategic planning process. The reason for this is because implementation requires change, and some of those changes require fundamental shifts in approach.

The implementation of the strategic plan will be the ongoing responsibility of the County Board. The responsibilities of the County Board will be as follows:

- 1) Establishing implementation priorities. Not all of the plan can be implemented at once, so it will be necessary to work with those who will have the responsibility for implementation of various components to establish priorities for the actions undertaken.
- 2) Establishing the implementation staff. The plan will involve various staff members to address different components of the plan. Part of this effort also means assigning responsibility for implementation of specific actions to specific individuals or groups.
- 3) Monitoring the plan's implementation and progress towards achieving goals. This is a two-part function. First, the County Board will be monitoring progress toward implementing the plan's specific recommendations for change. Second, the County Board will be monitoring effect of this change (i.e. performance on addressing key issues and achieving goals.)
- 4) Recommending revisions to the strategic plan. The strategic plan is not a static document. In fact, to remain effective, it must be regularly fine-tuned in response to: (a) information about the changing environment within which it operates; and (b) monitoring information about the effectiveness of its strategies.

On roll call vote this **RESOLUTION NO. 14-05-13-46** passes this 13th day of May, 2014.

Williamson County Board of Commissioners



Ron Ellis, Chairman

VOTING yea



Brent Gentry, Commissioner

VOTING yea



Jim Marlo, Commissioner

VOTING yea

ATTEST:



Amanda Barnes, County Clerk and Recorder