

# 2019-2023 STRATEGIC AGENDA



KING COUNTY  
SUPERIOR COURT

&

DEPARTMENT  
OF JUDICIAL  
ADMINISTRATION

September 2019



---

## Table of Contents

### 2019 Strategic Planning Committee

Overview/Introduction .....	1
Mission, Vision, and Core Values (Updated 2019).....	2
Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs), Goals, and Objectives (Updated 2019) .....	3
SFA 1: Access, Services and Programs that Ensure Justice .....	4
SFA 2: Case Management and Timely Resolution.....	6
SFA 3: Funding for Core Responsibilities and Court Innovations.....	8
SFA 4: Facilities, Security, and Technology Expansion/Improvement .....	10
SFA 5: Judicial Officer/Staff Development and Workforce Engagement.....	12
Implementation .....	14
Glossary of Terms.....	15

### APPENDICES – Available Upon Request

- A: 2019 Strategic Planning Surveys – Summary of Findings
- B: Trends Information

## Members of the 2019 Strategic Planning Committee:

Hon. James E. Rogers Presiding Judge	Hon. Bill A. Bowman Assistant Presiding Judge
Hon. Chad Allred Chief Maleng Regional Justice Center Judge	Hon. Sean O'Donnell Chief Criminal Judge
Hon. Judith H. Ramseyer Chief Juvenile Judge	Hon. Julie Spector Chief Civil Judge
Hon. Tanya Thorp Chief Unified Family Court Judge	Hon. Elizabeth Berns Lead Dependency Judge
Hon. Mary E. Roberts Lead Involuntary Treatment Act Judge	Hon. Johanna Bender Superior Court Judge
Hon. Regina Cahan Superior Court Judge	Hon. John Erlick Superior Court Judge
Hon. Laura Inveen Superior Court Judge	Hon. Dean S. Lum Superior Court Judge
Hon. Patrick Oishi Superior Court Judge	Mr. Paul Sherfey Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Linda Ridge Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	Mr. Steve Davis Director, Finance
Ms. Rachael DeVillar Director, Court Operations	Ms. Lea Ennis Director, Juvenile Court Operations
Mr. Andy Hill Director, Information Technology	Ms. Barb Miner Director, Department of Judicial Administration
Ms. Jorene Reiber Director, Family Court Operations	Ms. Minerva Villarreal Director, Human Resources
Ms. Jamie Holter Communications Manager	Ms. Beth Taylor Project Program Manager
Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey CEO, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.	Dr. David A. Price Senior Consultant, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.

---

## 2019 – 2023 Strategic Agenda

September 2019

### Overview

The King County Superior Court and Department of Judicial Administration, hereinafter referred to as Court, are pleased to present the updated, 2019 -2023 Strategic Agenda developed by the Executive Committee and administrative leadership in late spring/summer of 2019. We are eager to continue our work on several strategic focus areas that are similar to the past Strategic Agenda as well as several newly defined strategic focus areas, which emerged from the most recent planning process. They are:

1. Access, Services, and Programs that Ensure Justice
2. Case Management and Timely Resolution
3. Funding for Core Responsibilities and Court Innovations
4. Facilities, Security, and Technology Expansion/Improvement
5. Judicial Officer/Staff Development and Workforce Engagement

The above strategic focus areas are a result of reviewing internal and external trends, reviewing the 2019 strategic planning survey results (of judicial officers, staff, and external partners and stakeholders), and updating the organizational assessment. The analysis reflected that the Court does many things well and many changes and improvements have been made over the past 5-10 years. Still, the Court faces many ongoing challenges. The Court must be forward looking and proactive, always preparing for growth and increasing demands. It also must continually optimize its resources to ensure excellent public service.

This Strategic Agenda presents the Court's updated mission, vision, and core values. Also included are brief descriptions of each of the strategic focus areas, the long-range goals in each area, and strategies/objectives for making changes and improvements.

### Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Below are the Court's updated mission, vision, and core values.



## MISSION



The mission of the King County Superior Court is to serve the public by ensuring justice through accessible and effective forums for the fair, understandable, and timely resolution of legal matters.

## VISION



Open to  
Trusted by  
Justice for **ALL**

- Provide the highest quality of justice – fair, timely, accessible, understandable, user-friendly, and bias free to court users
- Increase public understanding and be recognized as a “center of excellence” for its services and innovative practices
- Be forward looking and proactive
- Create an ideal, satisfying and engaging place to work
- Expand services in response to the changing needs of court users and the community
- Optimize the use of existing and emerging technologies to enhance access and efficiency
- Collaborate and form new partnerships with justice system and community partners and stakeholders
- Govern and lead effectively

## CORE VALUES



### FAIR, UNDERSTANDABLE, AND TIMELY

Act fairly, timely, and without bias, and ensure decisions are clear and understandable.

### LEADERSHIP

Model leadership, excellence, civility and high ethical standards at all levels, and in all areas, of the Court.

### RESPECT

In all we do, show respect for, and include those of, all backgrounds and cultures.

### ACCESSIBLE

Ensure equal access to the Court, and ensure court proceedings and offices are physically accessible and understandable to all.

### SAFE

Provide a safe and secure courthouse for everyone, ensuring the right to witness and participate in the delivery of justice.

### SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

Provide the highest quality of services to the public and all those who use the Court. Help court users successfully navigate the court system and complete work in the most efficient and effective manner. Foster a culture of continuous improvement focused on solution-oriented outcomes.

### INNOVATION

Implement best practices and innovative programs/solutions to advance the Court and meet future needs.

---

## Strategic Focus Areas, Long-Range Goals, and Objectives

Below are updated strategic focus areas, the key areas that are vitally important to the Court in the coming years. Both organizations will focus on making improvements in these areas. Also listed in this section are the goals and strategies (i.e., objectives) for making changes and improvements.

### **Strategic Focus Areas**

(Revised June 2019)

1. Access, Services, and Programs that Ensure Justice
2. Case Management and Timely Resolution
3. Funding for Core Responsibilities and Court Innovations
4. Facilities, Security, and Technology Expansion/Improvement
5. Judicial Officer/Staff Development and Workforce Engagement

---

## **Strategic Focus Area 1: Access, Services, and Programs that Ensure Justice**

The Court is committed to ensuring justice for all those who seek it. To achieve this goal, the Court must assure its services and programs are accessible, understandable, and meet the needs of all Court users.

King County's population is growing and is more racially and culturally diverse than ever before. Additionally, more individuals and households are living in poverty as the cost of living continues to rise in the City of Seattle and King County. There also is an increasing wealth gap in King County between high-income and low-income earners.

The Court faces mounting pressures to be more accessible and enhance services and programs in response to the changing demographics, population shifts, and economic conditions in the County. For example, the Court has evidenced an increase in the number of self-represented litigants and those with limited English proficiency. The need for self-help services and resources along with the need for language assistance and interpreter services are on the rise. There also is a high need to expand remote and online access to the Court and enhance the ability to conduct Court business without traveling to courthouses. Finally, there is an increasing need for treatment and other specialized services and programs to address the varied needs of litigants, families, and youth involved in the court system (e.g., substance abuse or mental health issues; dually diagnosed issues; fewer resources to pay fines/fees; educational, vocational, and other support programs; etc.). The Court and community together must provide effective and innovative services and programs to help court users comply with court orders and successfully navigate the court system.

Findings from the 2019 strategic planning survey of judicial officers, Court staff and external partners/stakeholders suggest potential areas for the Court to focus its improvement efforts.

- Enhance services, assistance, and resources for self-represented litigants and non-English speaking court users (e.g., how to navigate court processes/procedures, how to connect with resources, directions within the court to appropriate forums, YouTube videos/podcasts, kiosks).
- Simplify (remove the legalese from) court instructions/processes to make them more understandable for all court users.
- Enhance remote/electronic access to the court (e.g. access to court and case information, file documents, pay fines/fees, communicate with the Courts, attend appointments).
- Increase the availability of services/programs provided by the Court (e.g., self-help, interpreter services, printing resources and administrative help with directions and general information, alternative dispute resolution, restorative and treatment programs).
- Increase the availability of services/programs within the community (e.g., Community Corrections Accountability Program, culturally relevant programs for youth and young adults).



---

## Long Range Goals and Objectives (2019)

### Goal 1: The Court will be accessible and understandable to all people.

- a. Enhance services/assistance and resources available to self-represented, non-English-speaking, disabled, and racially and culturally diverse court users.
- b. Ensure Court processes and procedures are consistent and understandable to all court users.
- c. Enhance remote/online access to court information and ability to do business with the Court electronically.
- d. Expand services and programs to the south and other areas of the County as needed.

### Goal 2: The Court will provide services and programs that meet the needs of court users and achieve successful justice-related outcomes.

- a. Enhance and expand mission-driven services and programs in response to the needs of court users (including restorative justice and therapeutic treatment Court programs).
- b. Explore and implement national best/promising practices, evidence-based programs, and other innovative court services.
- c. Continuously evaluate and improve the effectiveness of court provided programs and services.
- d. Adapt/implement innovative service delivery methods.
- e. Advocate for, and collaborate with justice system and community partners to enhance and expand, community-based treatment and support/wrap-around services for individuals, families, and youth.

### Goal 3: All court users will be treated respectfully, fairly, and timely.

- a. Promote fairness for all.
- b. Explore and implement innovative practices that promote equitable access to court programs and services.
- c. Assure timely and unbiased services to all court users.
- d. Communicate customer service standards and expectations to judicial officers and staff and provide needed training.

---

## Strategic Focus Area 2: Case Management and Timely Resolution

Justice is served when legal matters are heard and resolved in a fair and timely manner. The Court is committed to managing cases effectively, ensuring decisions are made through fair court processes, and resolving legal matters in a timely manner.

While historical trends show filings for most case types are relatively stable (civil commitments and probate/guardianship the increase exceptions; and juvenile offender the decrease exception), recent upticks in several case type areas are cause for concern, as are general case complexity and corresponding resources. For example, many cases are more complex (e.g., multiple issues and parties), docket time is scarce for some case types, it is taking longer to conclude cases, and case prioritization is affecting timely resolution of certain case types. In addition, case management practices – scheduling, promoting alternative dispute resolution, triaging cases, limiting continuances, using technology to garner efficiencies, and the like – also need to be strengthened to ensure cases are managed effectively and efficiently. The workloads of judicial officers and staff need to be continuously evaluated and balanced/re-balanced as case composition and service demands change. Additionally, turnover in the judiciary has created a steep learning curve for new judicial officers that must be included in such an assessment.

The 2019 survey comments about case management and timely resolution included:

- Manage continuances of criminal case processing to improve timeliness.
- Improve scheduling practices (e.g., reduce the need for calendar calls and allow participants to set a specific time to appear before the Court; minimize long waits for litigants).
- Provide legal assistance (e.g., partner with legal aid groups) and streamline court rules/procedures to assist self-represented litigants.
- Devote additional judicial and/or commissioner resources to the expanding dependency court caseload.
- Explore and use existing and new technologies to more effectively manage cases, conduct more efficient hearings, and improve communication with partners and litigants (e.g., video-appearances; texting notifications, going paperless/use of electronic files, case management reports).
- Make procedural fairness a paramount concern of all judicial officers.
- Improve technology to make case information more accessible.
- Improve communication and information flow with justice system and community partners.

---

## Long Range Goals and Objectives (2019)

### Goal 1: The Court will process and manage all cases efficiently and effectively.

- a. Continue moving toward a paperless Court.
- b. Improve scheduling practices (including online scheduling).
- c. Implement other innovative and effective case management practices (e.g., on-time scheduling, ADR, triaging cases, limiting continuances/trial date certainty).
- d. Ensure court rules and procedures are consistent, understandable, and accessible.
- e. Continually evaluate and implement changes that will improve operational efficiency and court processes, whether through staffing or technology.

### Goal 2: The Court will resolve all cases/legal matters in a fair and timely manner.

- a. Continuously review and rebalance trial/case assignments and workloads across the Court.
- b. Reduce length of time from filing to case resolution and increase trial date certainty.
- c. Simplify court processes and procedures to assure timely resolution of cases.
- d. Establish time standards and measure outcomes in accordance with those standards.
- e. Employ efforts to improve juror yield by underrepresented groups to achieve juror representation reflective of the community.
- f. Expand access to video interpretation/language assistance for all court hearings.
- g. Use existing and new technologies to improve notice and conduct timely hearings. (e.g., texting notifications, video-appearances/hearings).
- h. Implement, and reinforce the use of, principles and practices that promote procedural fairness.
- i. Evaluate, continuously improve, and report on the Court's timeliness (e.g., time to disposition, age of pending cases, clearance rates, etc.).

---

### **Strategic Focus Area 3: Funding for Core Responsibilities and Court Innovations**

The Court needs sufficient funding for core, mission-driven responsibilities as well as to invest in Court innovations. The Court's budget is a function of decisions negotiated by elected officials at the state, county and local levels of government. Decisions are therefore partly affected by the health of the state and local economies, and as a result, are fluid and can be unpredictable. In order to: (1) meet its core responsibilities to the public and as the third branch of government; (2) maintain and enhance existing services and programs; (3) provide a healthy, productive work environment; and (4) address the increasing service demands of court users and stakeholders, the Court needs adequate and stable funding. The Court also needs funding to respond to unfunded legislative mandates and to invest in innovations and best practices that will enhance court performance and the delivery of justice services.

The Court has a duty to budget responsibly and justify its funding requests to decision makers. However, developing a budget that satisfies the Court's multiple constituencies and many demands is challenging. For example, public expectations of the Court for services often exceed the Court's funding allocation and any request for additional resources are in competition with requests from other publicly-funded organizations. Further, within the Court there is competition for funds that must be balanced against needs and the Court's service/program priorities.

Comments on this topic by respondents to the 2019 strategic planning survey included:

- Continue efforts to ensure the court budget can support needed services and programs, and grow programs with demonstrated need.
- Secure stable/adequate funding for programs/treatment in Family and Juvenile Court settings.
- Lobby the legislature for more funding.
- Be a leader. Our Court is looked to as a resource for legislative ideas that affect justice.
- Seek additional funding for Courts that serve marginalized persons (children-dependency court, treatment courts, mental health court).
- Invest in/seek sufficient funding for new technologies needed to improve access, timely resolution, and operational efficiency.
- Ensure the Court has adequate numbers of judicial officers and staff to resolve cases in a fair and timely manner and provide needed services and programs.

---

## Long Range Goals and Objectives (2019)

### Goal 1: The Court will have sufficient and stable funding for core responsibilities including unfunded mandates.

- a. Implement cost-saving and cost-reduction measures where possible.
- b. Demonstrate the prudent and responsible use of funding/resources.
- c. Demonstrate the need and advocate for funding/resources to meet core responsibilities (e.g., adequate staffing levels, court safety and security, language assistance/interpreter services, treatment and other successful programs, equipment and technology, etc.).
- d. Build understanding and support for the Court's fiscal and resource needs.
- e. Communicate and work collaboratively with executive and legislative branches at the state and local levels to ensure funding and resource needs are met.
- f. Evaluate, shift, and reallocate resources and workloads in response to changing needs, demands, and circumstances.

### Goal 2: The Court will have sufficient funding and resources to implement innovations that will enhance court performance and improve the delivery of justice services.

- a. Explore and pursue court innovations and funding sources to enhance services and court operations.
- b. Demonstrate the value of best/innovative practices and technologies.
- c. Obtain stable county funding for court innovations.
- d. Seek additional creative ways of funding and sustaining court innovations, such as through grants and partnerships.

---

#### **Strategic Focus Area 4: Facilities, Security, and Technology Expansion/Improvement**

Expanding and improving the Court's facilities were among the most needed improvements mentioned by judicial officers, Court staff, and external partners. Survey respondents mentioned: (1) the age of the existing facilities, (2) concerns about safety and security at the facilities for staff and court users, (3) the locations and accessibility of facilities (including availability of parking), and (4) the adequacy of facilities and space to meet the increasing and changing work and service needs. The Court needs to prepare now for future facility needs and locations ensuring it can continue to serve King County's growing and geographically dispersed population. Facilities need to be accessible and provide a safe and secure environment that promotes professionalism, respect, and public trust.

Rapidly-changing and advancing technologies also pose challenges for the Court. Technology has reshaped the Court both in terms of how it conducts and manages its own business and in the services it offers as well as how it delivers those services to court users and partners. Existing and emerging technologies will likely also affect facility configurations and ability to conduct business. The impacts of technology have, for the most part, been positive and resulted in more timely and effective management and service delivery. Rapid refinements in existing technologies and the introduction of new technologies hold the promise of creating further improvements in the Court's service and operational capacity. The Court must continue to plan for, invest in, and keep pace with/implement existing and emerging technologies. Decisions about technology also affect the Court's facility configuration; for example, how large do courtrooms need to be to accommodate new technology?

Observations and suggestions about facilities, security, and technology were reflected in the 2019 survey responses. They included:

- Renovate the aging infrastructure, in particular the Seattle courthouse. It no longer meets the changing needs of court users and those providing services including justice partners.
- Develop new facilities/court locations to allow court business and court appearances in growing population centers.
- Expand services to other locations throughout the County (e.g., south and east sides) to provide improved access to population centers. Diversify court operations recognizing demographic changes and greater court usage among suburban populations.
- Improve perimeter safety (downtown) and install/provide greater security at the Court's facilities (e.g., better metal detectors, security cameras in stairwells, separate employee entrance to main courthouse) so all court staff and users feel safe.
- Expand courtroom technology (e.g., video conferencing in all courtrooms, electronic document filing, electronic docketing, software to display documents/images) that aids efficiency in the court process.
- Expand basic technology for court users (e.g., video kiosks, printers/monitors) to improve service delivery and the customer experience.
- Enhance the Court's management information systems so that they can communicate effectively with other systems.
- Apply technology applications to manage and make individual judicial work products searchable by and accessible to other judges.
- Move toward a paperless Court.



---

## Long Range Goals and Objectives (2019)

Goal 1: Court facilities will be accessible, promote public trust, and meet the needs of the County's growing and geographically dispersed population.

- a. Improve, modernize, and build out current courthouses creating functional space (courtrooms, offices, meeting rooms) and a welcoming environment for court users, judicial officers, and staff.
- b. Develop plans to replace and/or remodel the downtown courthouse.
- c. Expand court locations to growing population centers (east and south sides of the County).
- d. Educate and build support among county leadership, justice system and community partners, and the public for the modernization, replacement, and expansion of Court facilities.
- e. Collaborate with the county in developing a successful funding strategy for facilities maintenance and expansion.

Goal 2: Judicial officers, Court employees, and Court users will be safe in and around all Court locations.

- a. Understand and address the personal safety concerns of court users, judicial officers and staff.
- b. Regularly train judicial officers and staff on courthouse and personal safety measures.
- c. Meet and collaborate with county and courthouse partners to address the security concerns of court users in courthouse facilities.
- d. Implement safety and security measures to prevent or mitigate the effects of threats or hazards on court users, judicial officers and staff.

Goal 3: The Court's technological infrastructure/technologies will advance service delivery, improve operational efficiency, and support the work of the Court.

- a. Enhance the Court's infrastructure/use of existing technologies (e.g., case management system, website, e-filing, video conferencing, kiosks, texting notifications).
- b. Based on identified business needs, identify innovative technological solutions that will improve services and court operations.
- c. Educate, build support for, and seek funding for technological advancements and infrastructure improvements among County leadership, justice system and community partners, and the public.

---

## **Strategic Focus Area 5: Judicial Officer/Staff Development and Workforce Engagement**

The Court's ability to achieve its goals and deliver on its promise of providing fair and timely justice is a function in part on the quality of its judiciary and staff. The workload and service expectations and demands present numerous challenges, primarily to develop a workforce that possesses the knowledge, skills, and abilities to adequately address users' needs and a workforce that is fully engaged, innovative, and able to lead and adapt to change. The Court is at a pivotal moment in its workforce development, however. This has resulted for several reasons, including judicial officer/staff turnover, increasing and changing service demands, technological advances that have reshaped how work is completed, high workloads, and an aging workforce, many of whom will be eligible for retirement within the next several years.

The Court recognizes these challenges and thus, the need for onboarding, educating, and training judicial officers and staff, and strengthening the job satisfaction and engagement of all who work for the Court. The Court's leadership understands and appreciates the value of a workforce that is well trained, has the tools it needs, and that works in a positive environment that fosters high levels of engagement and satisfaction.

Needed improvements, as identified by the 2019 strategic planning survey, included:

- Give staff more opportunities to grow and learn new skills to meet changing work demands and to reach career goals.
- Review work responsibilities/workloads for opportunities to allow more flexible schedules and telecommuting.
- Educate and train new judicial officers/staff (e.g., equity and social justice, case management, court processes/procedures, procedural justice, implicit bias, diversity and inclusion, cross-training).
- Offer appropriate training and support to help judicial officers/staff apply new technologies and manage change.
- Ensure that the size of the workforce is adequate to meet current and future needs.
- Develop future judicial and administrative leaders and a succession plan.

---

## Long Range Goals and Objectives (2019)

Goal 1: Judicial officers and staff will be skilled and competent in all aspects of their work, capable of performing at the highest levels.

- a. Onboard and orient judicial officers and staff to the Court's culture and service and job expectations.
- b. Enhance and expand education, training, and mentoring for judicial officers.
- c. Enhance and expand training, cross-training, and development opportunities for staff.
- d. Provide on-demand learning for judicial officers and staff.
- e. Provide performance feedback and coaching to enhance job performance.

Goal 2: Judicial officers and staff will be fully engaged.

- a. Involve judicial officers and staff in change and improvement activities.
- b. Provide fair and competitive compensation and benefits.
- c. Provide development, growth, and career advancement opportunities for staff.
- d. Foster teamwork and collegiality within and across divisions/areas of the Court and all levels of judicial officers and staff.
- e. Value and recognize the contributions of judicial officers and staff and service excellence.
- f. Implement best practices that will attract top talent and enhance satisfaction and engagement (e.g., networking, cross-training, development opportunities, coaching/mentoring).
- g. Develop the next generation of court leaders.

---

## Implementation

The Court has a long history of thinking and planning strategically and making court-wide changes and improvements in response to the Court's Strategic Agenda. The implementation process has evolved over time involving more judicial officers, managers, and staff in working on numerous strategic projects each year resulting in significant benefits to the Court. Going forward, the Court remains committed to following and implementing the roadmap laid out in this Strategic Agenda. A brief summary of the Court's planning history follows.

In 2008, under the guidance of a consultant team from the National Center for State Courts, a judicial and administrative strategic planning committee was formed to review the Court's then (1996) Strategic Plan and create a 5-year strategic agenda. The intention was to assess the Court's current performance, envision a preferred future, and implement a "road map" on how to get there. The Superior Court's 2009 – 2014 Strategic Agenda was adopted in March 2009.

During 2014, the Court significantly revised the previous 5-year strategic agenda planning and implementation processes. With technical assistance from PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., the Court's strategic planning committee included surveys and trends information to help formulate the Court's 2014-2019 Strategic Agenda; and, greatly expanded those involved in the implementation plan by forming Strategic Action Teams (SAT) with identified judge sponsors, team leaders, and employees that volunteered to participate on specific projects.

Implementation of the Court's 5-year Strategic Agenda requires transitioning from a focus on the long-term and general to term-limited and specific. The process shifts from a high-level multi-year strategic view to an annual implementation cycle of:

1. Communicating the Strategic Agenda and implementation plan,
2. Soliciting and prioritizing new strategic projects,
3. Organizing and orienting implementation teams, and
4. Executing strategic projects over 12 months or less.

At the end of each implementation cycle, progress is assessed, process modifications are made as needed, and new strategic project ideas are solicited for the next year. The strategic project ideas are vetted among the Court's judicial and administrative leaders and a short list of strategic projects are advanced to the Court's Executive Committee for approval. Once approved, the implementation cycle begins again. The Court has learned many lessons over the years and continues to refine and enhance strategic planning and implementation processes. A few of the lessons learned are:

- The importance of and need to enhance communications and branding of the message to raise awareness court-wide;
- The need to develop a more robust, effective, and systematic way to solicit new strategic initiative ideas from judicial officers and employees;
- The importance of defining what is / is not a strategic project and establishing realistic outcomes / deliverables;
- The need to integrate strategic project goals and objectives into the annual work plans of chiefs, departments / divisions, and employees; and
- The need to develop effective methods for closing out or handing off strategic projects to court operations or a standing committee.

Please see the Court's *Annual Operational Plan At-a-Glance*, for a list of the strategic projects by year.

---

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Core Values: Carefully composed declarations of an organization's beliefs, ethics, and code of desirable behaviors intended to guide day-to-day actions. Core values describe the behaviors, attitudes, and thinking an organization will reward.

Goals: Are broad statements that define desired, end targets.

Mission: Defines an organization's purpose – why it exists.

Operational Plan: An organization's short-term plan, which lays out the priority projects/strategic initiatives for a one-year period.

Organizational Assessment: A critical review of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) in light of the stated mission, vision, and values.

Strategic Focus Areas: Internal or external issues that are fundamentally important to the organization. They are the major issues the organization must work on in the future to fulfill the mission and work toward the vision. SFAs frame the basic direction and priorities of the organization for the long-term.

Strategic Initiatives/Projects: Specific, short-term (12 months) priority projects representing the organization's priorities for a one-year period. The priority projects comprise the organization's Operational Plan.

Strategic Planning: A tool and process for helping an organization set a strategic agenda/direction, establish long-term goals, and execute on strategies for achieving measurable improvements and results.

Strategies/Objectives: General statements that describe the manner in which the end result/target – or goal – will be achieved; they are the means to the end.

Trends Analysis: A critical review of the implications of external and internal trends on the organization.

Vision: Defines a future, ideal state; it describes what the organization will look like or being doing ideally in the future. A vision statement should be elevating and inspirational.