



# 2025 – 2029 Strategic Plan

July 22, 2025



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

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Additional Resources:

- [External Trends](#)
- [Internal Trends](#)
- [2025 Strategic Planning Survey – Results and Findings](#)



This document was developed under grant number SJI-24T-045. The points of view expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the State Justice Institute.

## Strategic Planning Team

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# Letter from Presiding Judge and CEO

Chambers of  
**JACKQUELINE C. JACKSON**  
Presiding Judge



4050 Main Street  
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**JASON B. GALKIN**  
Court Executive Officer

**Superior Court of California**  
County of Riverside

July 22, 2025

It is with great excitement and a profound sense of shared purpose that we introduce Riverside Superior Court's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. This document reflects our commitment to the people of Riverside County and, most importantly, it serves as a roadmap that will guide our collective efforts for the next five years.

For the first time in over a decade, our court community came together to chart a new course. This plan is the product of that collaboration, informed by feedback gathered through surveys of our staff, judicial officers, the public and justice system stakeholders. It reflects our collective priorities, fresh perspectives, and the renewed commitment of everyone who took part in this journey. It creates a shared vision that will serve as our foundation and our guide, providing a clear framework for how we will prioritize our focus, make decisions, and work together to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Our mission is clear: as an independent branch of government, we serve the public by ensuring access to justice and providing a fair and open forum to resolve legal matters and protect individual rights. This strategic plan brings that mission to life with new energy and creative thinking. It is our playbook for turning our vision to be an innovative, efficient, and trusted institution that upholds the highest standards of justice into reality for every person who interacts with our court.

This will be accomplished by focusing on six key areas. We are particularly excited about the opportunities these goals present for our team, as our success begins with you. We will be:

- **Enhancing the Court User Experience:** Making our court more accessible and easier to navigate for everyone.
- **Optimizing Operational Efficiency:** Being responsible stewards of our resources to ensure timely and effective resolutions.
- **Increasing Public Trust and Understanding:** Working to demystify the justice system through transparency and outreach.
- **Strengthening Stakeholder Relations:** Building and fortifying our partnerships within the justice system and the community.

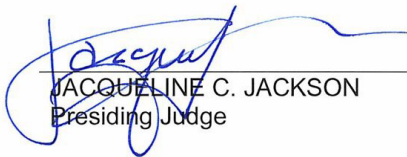
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- **Transforming Court Culture & Developing a Team for the Future:** Investing in our greatest asset—our people—to foster a collaborative, innovative, and supportive work environment.
  - **Elevating Court Infrastructure:** Modernizing our facilities and technology to meet the demands of a 21st-century court.

These goals are ambitious and achieving them rests on the commitment of each and every one of us. This plan calls on us to live by our core values of Accessibility, Accountability, Collaboration, Diversity/Equity, Efficiency, Innovation and Agility, and Timeliness. This plan both empowers and requires every member of our team to contribute to our shared success.

We are incredibly optimistic about the future of our court. This strategic plan is our pledge to our staff, our justice partners, and the public we serve that we will strive every day to be a court that not only is fair and just but also one that listens, adapts, and constantly seeks to improve.

Thank you for joining us on this important journey. Together, we will build a stronger, more responsive, and more trusted justice system for all.

Sincerely,



JACQUELINE C. JACKSON  
Presiding Judge



JASON B. GALKIN  
Court Executive Officer/Clerk of Court

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# 2025 – 2029 Strategic Plan

July 22, 2025

## Overview

The Riverside Superior Court stands at a critical juncture, balancing growing service demands, workforce transitions, and financial constraints while fulfilling its commitment to provide access to justice. To establish a clear vision and strategic direction, the Court embarked upon a comprehensive strategic planning process designed to build consensus around key priorities and position the Court to effectively serve our community.

This Strategic Plan was developed through a collaborative and data-informed process led by the Court's Strategic Planning Committee, which included representatives from nearly all operational and administrative units ensuring diverse experiences and geographic perspectives. The planning process, which was supported by a grant from the State Justice Institute and facilitated by Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey, CEO of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., included evaluating internal and external trends, identifying organizational strengths and operational challenges, and defining a shared vision for the future. The committee's efforts were strengthened by input from judges, court staff, justice system and community partners, and stakeholders. The final product is a Strategic Plan tailored to the Court's unique strengths, needs, and circumstances – a roadmap to ensure the Court's long-term sustainability and to support its critical mission.

Six strategic focus areas (SFAs) were identified.



With this plan in place, the Court will shift focus to implementation. The annual *Operational Plan* identifies specific priorities each year, ensuring focused progress and accountability. Amid ongoing budget constraints and judicial resource challenges, this plan will help the Court make data-informed decisions about where to invest time, effort, and resources, consistent with its strategic goals. Through the Strategic Plan and Operational Plans, the Court affirms its commitment to delivering outstanding service to the community - both today and into the future.

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## Mission, Vision, and Core Values



### Mission:

The Court, as an independent branch of government, serves the public by ensuring access to justice, and providing a forum to resolve legal matters and protect individual rights.

### Vision:

The Court strives to be innovative, efficient, and maintain the highest standards of justice. The Court provides outstanding service to the public, administers justice fairly and transparently, and upholds public trust.

### Core Values:

- **Accessibility:** We strive to remove barriers to participation in the court process.
- **Accountability:** We conduct the business of the court in a transparent and fiscally responsible manner.
- **Collaboration:** We foster an environment where teamwork, open communication and mutual respect are paramount, and we work together to achieve common goals.
- **Diversity/Equity:** We incorporate the varied perspectives and experiences of our employees, community, and court users.
- **Efficiency:** We optimize the use of all court resources, striving to do the most with our resources.
- **Innovation and Agility:** We embrace, pursue, and implement new ideas, methods, and technologies and adapt to changing circumstances through continuous improvement.
- **Timeliness:** We are committed to promptly managing the work of the court.

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## Trends Analysis

The Court conducted a trends analysis to understand the external and internal landscapes and anticipate and prepare for future implications. The trends analysis also helps foresee future opportunities and potential threats or vulnerabilities.

Myriad external and internal trends were reviewed as part of the strategic planning process. External trends included social / demographic, economic, pandemic, workforce of the future, policy / political, technological, and justice system trends. Caseloads and workloads, programs such as self-help, language access, jury statistics, human resources, and fiscal trends were among the internal trends reviewed.

To be “future-ready,” the Court must anticipate, prepare for, and respond to these trends, which will inevitably affect the Court in the coming years. The Court will need to be proactive, innovative, and continuously improve to respond to the changing landscape. Specific implications identified by the planning committee included the following. A future-ready Court must:

1. Prepare for and respond to changing expectations and increasing service needs of Riverside County’s communities.
2. Enhance access to the Court (e.g., information, resources, services, justice) for all people.
3. Be stewards of public resources, ensuring the Court is using fiscal and other resources responsibly and transparently.
4. Resolve matters in a fair, timely, and efficient manner.
5. Enhance court programming.
6. Leverage existing and emerging technologies to enhance access, services, and operational efficiency.
7. Prepare for a workforce of the future.
8. Strengthen and expand collaborative relations with justice system and community partners and stakeholders.
9. Improve state and local governmental relations.
10. Build public trust and confidence in the judicial branch and court system.

[See Appendix A](#) for detailed trends information including a summary of demographic and economic trends, access to the trends data, additional details about the long-term implications for the Court. Also included are plausible positive and challenging future scenarios for the Court, based on the future implications of trends.

## Organizational Assessment

An organizational assessment helps to identify an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threat/vulnerabilities.

This section presents the Court's strengths and areas for improvement based on the trends analysis and review of the strategic planning survey results. Also presented below is a summary of future opportunities and potential threats, challenges, and vulnerabilities. [See Appendix B](#) for more details.

Strengths	Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Customer Service</u>: court users gave high ratings on court performance (accessibility, timeliness, fairness, etc.) and assistance received from court employees</li> <li>2. <u>Self-help services</u>: help court users with their court business/legal matter</li> <li>3. <u>Remote / virtual court proceedings</u>: reduce costs and increase convenience (access) for litigants</li> <li>4. <u>Fair</u>: the Court is perceived as fair by litigants</li> <li>5. <u>Workforce</u>: low turnover; staff are generally satisfied; staff are interested in learning, growing, advancing; the workforce reflects the community and is multi-generational</li> <li>6. <u>Judges/Staff</u>: want to be able to do more and enhance services; high drive to do better and continuously improve</li> <li>7. <u>Leadership</u>: positive feedback from the bench on transparency across Court resources and spending</li> <li>8. <u>Culture of Resilience</u>: the Court has navigated challenging times; it has survived budget, COVID, resource challenges</li> <li>9. <u>Fiscal</u>: the Court has found a way to manage with limited fiscal resources/budget</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Customer Service</u>: long wait times for phone calls</li> <li>2. <u>Self-Help Services</u>: demand for services is increasing; more litigants need assistance</li> <li>3. <u>Timely Resolution / Court Operations</u>: improve timely resolution; need to manage juror summons and jurors more effectively; need to improve operational efficiency by streamlining work processes and using technology; need to better manage / allocate judicial and staff resources to balance caseloads and workloads</li> <li>4. <u>Remote/virtual court proceedings</u>: refine, improve, and use consistent practices where virtual proceedings are allowed and effective</li> <li>5. <u>Technology</u>: keep pace with evolving technologies (e.g., AI, cyber security, operational innovations/automation)</li> <li>6. <u>Judicial Education / Development</u>: invest in new judicial officers; need to educate judicial officers and develop them to step into leadership roles</li> <li>7. <u>Workforce</u>: need more training and development and career and succession planning; refine and expand hybrid/remote/flexible work arrangements; improve pay and flexible benefits; improve employee morale; improve organization communication</li> <li>8. <u>Facilities / Security / Parking</u>: improve safety and security; strengthen existing protocols and practices; better parking for jurors</li> <li>9. <u>External Relations</u>: improve relations with justice and community partners and stakeholders</li> <li>10. <u>Culture</u>: reshape Court culture based on vision and core values; improve employee satisfaction and engagement</li> </ol>

Opportunities	Potential Threats, Challenges, and Vulnerabilities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance access and services; improve the court user experience</li> <li>2. Improve operational efficiency and timely resolution</li> <li>3. Increase use of technology to enhance access, services, operational efficiency</li> <li>4. Improve infrastructure including facilities and security</li> <li>5. Develop a proactive, innovative, and satisfying culture</li> <li>6. Strengthen leadership and management practices</li> <li>7. Build a workforce of the future; be an employer of choice to attract and retain talent</li> <li>8. Enhance stakeholder, partner, and community relations and engagement</li> <li>9. Increase public understanding through education and engagement</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keeping up with the growing population and changing and growing expectations and needs of the public</li> <li>2. Keeping up with the pace of change (e.g., technology, legislation, voter initiatives, rising costs, changing workforce)</li> <li>3. Preparing for economic volatility and disparities</li> <li>4. Managing and balancing caseloads and workloads and using innovations to continuously improve</li> <li>5. Using and securing new and emerging technologies (e.g., AI, new case management system, cyber security)</li> <li>6. Improving facilities and security; repurposing space</li> <li>7. Preparing for a changing workforce</li> <li>8. Eroding trust in public institutions and building trust and confidence in the judicial branch</li> <li>9. Addressing legislative actions that impact the court (e.g., unfunded mandates)</li> <li>10. Losing focus on priorities and mission of the Court</li> </ol>

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## Strategic Focus Areas, Goals, and Strategies

The Court's strategic focus areas (SFAs), long-range goals, and strategies for achieving the goals are presented in this section.

SFAs are vital issues that impact the Court; they are of strategic importance. Long range goals are what the Court wants to accomplish in the long-term. Strategies describe generally how the Court will accomplish the goals.

See the Court's [Annual Operational Plan](#) for a list of the strategic initiatives – or projects – the Court is working on each year.

The Court's six SFAs are:



As the Court looks to the future, it recognizes the need to serve the public, conduct business, and operate differently than it has in the past. Key changes are needed for the Court to fulfill its mission and work toward its vision of the future. As the Court implements this Strategic Plan, it embraces and will continue to improve in applying the following principles and practices. The principles and practices cut across each SFA and are woven into the long-term goals and strategies. They are emphasized here so they are not lost in the sections below.

1. Foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.
2. Use data/reliable information to make leadership, management, and operational decisions.
3. Use and invest in existing and emerging technologies to enhance access, services, and operational efficiency.
4. Develop agile and adaptable structures and practices to effectively address future needs, opportunities, and challenges.
5. Work collaboratively with, and engage others in, making changes and improvements recognizing the Court is "better when working together."

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## SFA1: Enhance the Court User Experience

**Description:** Improving the court user experience is a high priority for the Court. Court users include litigants, family members, jurors, victims, witnesses, members of the public, the legal community, and other justice system and community partners. Court users are anyone that uses or works with the Court.

Improving the court user experience includes enhancing access to court resources, case information, services, and assistance and making the Court easier to understand and navigate. It also includes eliminating barriers to access such as language, cost, physical, lack of representation, lack of transportation, and more.

In sum, the Court will strive to optimize in-person, online, virtual information, resources, and services, making the Court more accessible, understandable, user-friendly, and service-oriented for all who use it.

**Survey Findings:** Improving the court user experience is supported by findings from the strategic planning surveys completed by external partners, court users, judicial officers, and employees. Survey findings relevant to this SFA are as follows.

1. Accessibility Court Performance Category: **Accessibility** was the lowest rated court performance category (of five areas) by both external partners and judicial officers/court employees. Questions in this category included: how easy it is to get information from the Court, whether the Court does a good job helping court users who need assistance, and whether court users understand what they need to do to participate in court proceedings or complete their court business.
2. Improvement suggestions from court user, external partner, and judicial officer/employee survey respondents included the following:
  - a. Provide more services, support, and resources for all court users and especially self-represented and other persons needing assistance (e.g., simplify access to services, enhance virtual and telephone access for litigants, expand service hours and night court, add a concierge or wayfinding program to assist court users).
  - b. Expand self-help services and resources to meet the needs of litigants across the County.
  - c. Improve customer service and reduce wait times (e.g., to access a person in the call center return phone calls).
  - d. Provide better/easier access to court information and documents (e.g., place more kiosks in convenient locations).
  - e. Improve virtual and online access to people, information, and resources (e.g., via live chat, texting, video access, website, online dockets, e-Filing).
  - f. Make it easier to access information, court employees, and court departments.
  - g. Provide access points such as satellite offices in outlying areas of the County, in collaboration with community and social service partners.
  - h. Improve the Court's website and online services (e.g., make all user-friendly, add live chat features, add informational videos).

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## Long Range Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1: All court users will be able to easily access and navigate the Court.

Strategy 1: Identify and understand the needs of litigants, jurors, victims, witnesses, the legal community, and partners.

Strategy 2: Simplify and enhance resources and information to assist court users and litigants.

Strategy 3: Use technologies to enhance access to personal, online, and remote assistance and court and case information.

Strategy 4: Expand in-person and virtual services to court users who need assistance.

Strategy 5: Educate the public about how to access the Court and find helpful resources.

### Goal 2: Court employees will provide outstanding service to all court users.

Strategy 1: Treat all court users with dignity and respect.

Strategy 2: Deliver court services in a timely manner, including reducing and maintaining reasonable wait times.

Strategy 3: Provide high quality and responsive services to court users.

Strategy 4: Establish and communicate clear service standards to employees across all roles/ departments.

Strategy 5: Provide ongoing training that will help staff deliver excellent service to the public

Strategy 6: Recognize employees who provide outstanding public service.

Strategy 7: Gather regular feedback from court users about their interactions and experiences.

Strategy 8: Build pride among employees for doing meaningful and impactful work.

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## SFA2: Optimize Operational Efficiency

**Description:** The Court is committed to operating efficiently and effectively. Using innovative practices, new technologies, and reliable data, the Court will: (a) optimize case management practices to ensure cases are resolved in a fair and timely manner and (b) streamline, simplify, and automate work processes and procedures to enhance court operations and administration. Among the Court's future priorities are implementing effective case management practices, optimizing virtual/remote proceedings, rendering fair, impartial, and timely decisions, treating all court users respectfully, reviewing and reengineering work processes and procedures across all areas of the Court, and allocating and shifting resources to meet caseload, workload, and administrative demands.

**Survey Findings:** The findings from the strategic planning surveys, completed by external partners, court users, judicial officers, and employees, support improvements in this area.

1. High Improvement Priority: **Timely Resolution** was the highest rated priority improvement area for external partner respondents and the third highest rated priority improvement area (out of 15) for judicial officers and court employees. Court users were not asked this survey question. This high priority area (on the survey) was defined as: reduce backlogs; reduce wait times and unnecessary delay; improve scheduling and case management practices; normalize procedures/ practices for in-person and virtual court proceedings and for providing virtual court services.
2. Timeliness Court Performance Category: The **Timeliness Court Performance Category** was rated second lowest (of five) by external partner survey respondents. This performance category included questions about wait times for scheduling and conducting hearings/trials, court events starting on time, cases/legal matters being resolved in a reasonable amount of time, and court employees providing information and services in a timely manner. Judicial officers and court employees gave the lowest ratings to the reasonableness of wait times for scheduling and conducting trials and the time it takes overall to resolve cases/legal matters.
3. Improvement suggestions provided by court user, external partner, and/or judicial officer/employee survey respondents included the following. Many suggested the Court should establish future goals around these areas.
  - a. Reduce the wait time for scheduling and/or conducting hearings/trials.
  - b. Start court hearings on time (when they are scheduled to occur).
  - c. Reduce the number of continuances.
  - d. Reduce backlogs and speed up judicial reviews.
  - e. Improve case management practices through expedited case processing and faster decisions.
  - f. Improve, expand, embrace, and optimize virtual/remote/video proceedings/appearances (e.g., processes, procedures, decorum, consistency across the Court, audio technology, partner with community centers/partners for remote hearings).
  - g. Expand mediation and alternative dispute resolution services.
  - h. Use new technologies to increase efficiency (e.g., add online advance check-in for hearings; use AI tools and automation for efficiency; enhance e-Filing; upgrade courtroom technology).
  - i. Improve access to, and communication and efficiency within and among, departments.
  - j. Allocate resources effectively to meet the growing caseloads and workloads.
  - k. Resolve all matters in a fair, impartial, and timely manner.

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## Long Range Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1: The Court will resolve legal matters in a fair, timely, and efficient manner.

Strategy 1: Implement effective case management practices across the Court.

Strategy 2: Reduce wait times for scheduling court matters and starting court hearings.

Strategy 3: Monitor and eliminate existing, and prevent future, case backlogs.

Strategy 4: Redistribute, maintain, and manage fluctuating workloads.

Strategy 5: Apply reliable data to address operational needs, opportunities, and deficiencies. Strategy 6: Educate court users about the Court and judicial process.

Strategy 7: Use technologies to increase efficiency.

Strategy 8: Train and secure buy-in from judicial officers and employees on practices that ensure fair and timely resolution.

Strategy 10: Ensure litigants understand the outcome of their legal matter and what they need to do to comply with the Court's order.

Strategy 11: Allocate resources effectively to meet caseload and workload demands.

### Goal 2: The Court's business processes and procedures will be efficient and effective.

Strategy 1: Utilize inter-departmental evaluation to ensure innovations and streamlining efforts are mindful of upstream and downstream impacts.

Strategy 2: Reinforce and build upon core functions, primary purposes, and goals of departments.

Strategy 3: Use technology and automation to streamline and enhance work tasks and processes.

Strategy 4: Communicate with and educate judicial officers, court employees, and court users on processes, procedures, and technologies.

Strategy 5: Develop, communicate, and implement uniform and simplified business and workflow processes and procedures countywide.

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Goal 3: The Court's data will be reliable and inform decision-making.

Strategy 1: Improve the quality and reliability of the Court's current and future data.

Strategy 2: Enhance judicial officer, leadership, and staff knowledge, skills, and abilities related to data analytics and collection.

Strategy 3: Enhance data input quality and consistency.

Strategy 4: Strengthen data reports produced and used by court leadership and judicial officers.

Goal 4: The Court will effectively manage and build the trust and confidence of jurors.

Strategy 1: Use data to optimize juror summoning and utilization.

Strategy 2: Make the jury selection process more efficient and effective.

Strategy 3: Improve the overall juror experience, including reducing wait times and ensuring prospective and selected jurors are treated with respect.

Strategy 4: Improve communication with people summoned to jury duty and those chosen to sit on juries.

Strategy 5: Advocate for better juror pay, convenient and affordable parking, and comfortable and modern jury room accommodations.

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### SFA3: Increase Public Trust and Understanding

**Description:** The Court's vision includes maintaining the highest standards of justice and upholding the public's trust. Trust in government institutions including the judicial branch has declined over the past decade. The Court is committed to increasing and regaining the public's trust in the judiciary as the third, independent, and co-equal branch of government.

To do so, the Court will demonstrate that it is fair, impartial, and bias free. Judicial officers will uphold laws and protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the California and US Constitutions. The Court also is committed to being transparent and accountable for the use of public resources. Additionally, the Court will educate the public about the judicial, explaining its role in maintaining a free and civil society. Finally, the Court will reach out, involve, listen, and be responsive to the concerns of communities across Riverside County.

**Survey Findings:** Survey respondents provided the following improvement suggestions related to this SFA.

1. High Improvement Priority: External partners and judicial officer/employee survey respondents rated **Public Trust** in the second tier of highest improvement priorities. Public Trust was defined as building trust and confidence of the public in the Court/judicial system.
2. Additional improvement suggestions provided by survey respondents included:
  - a. Build trust in the court and judicial branch by treating all people fairly and with respect.
  - b. Increase transparency and accountability in the administration of justice.
  - c. Be neutral and free from bias and inappropriate outside influence.

#### Long Range Goals and Strategies

##### Goal 1: The Court will be transparent, responsible and accountable.

Strategy 1: Educate the public about the Court and judicial branch of government.

Strategy 2: Share financial and performance information about the Court.

Strategy 3: Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and be responsible stewards of public resources.

##### Goal 2: The Court will be trusted by, and maintain a positive reputation with, the public.

Strategy 1: Strengthen relations and communication with communities across the County.

Strategy 2: Engage with and solicit feedback from diverse communities in the County.

Strategy 3: Share court news and accomplishments that demonstrate impact.

Strategy 4: Educate the public about court resources and performance.

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## SFA4: Strengthen Stakeholder Relations

**Description:** Although an independent and co-equal branch of government, the Court is inextricably linked to the executive and legislative branches of government (i.e., stakeholders) and justice system and community partners. For example, the Court, in administering justice, works closely with the County Board of Supervisors, County Administration, the state legislature, the California Supreme Court and Judicial Council, the legal community, law enforcement, and public and private service and treatment providers.

Strengthening stakeholder relations and collaboration are high priorities for the Court. Riverside County will benefit from the Court, stakeholders, and partners working better together (e.g., improving communication, coordination, collaboration; containing costs; implementing efficiencies). The Court is committed to collaborating with stakeholders and partners to improve access, services, fair, and timely resolution and justice outcomes for litigants. Communicating needs and advocating for needed funding and resources also are high priorities for the Court in the years ahead.

**Survey Findings:** External partners and judicial officers/court employees indicated improvements are needed in this area.

1. High Improvement Priority: External Partner survey respondents rated the **External Relations** improvement area as the fourth highest (out of a total of 15 topics). The description of this category included: strengthen relations with external partners/stakeholders (e.g., county & state levels) & form new/strengthen partnerships.
2. External partner survey respondents also provided the following improvement suggestions related to this area. Future goals of the Court should include these areas.
  - a. Add behavioral health programs and services (mental health/substance use).
  - b. Improve and form new community partnerships to fill gaps and enhance programs and services to assist justice involved individuals (e.g., behavioral health, education, housing, employment).
3. Judicial officer and court employee survey respondents provided the following suggestions for improvement related to this SFA. Future goals should include these areas.
  - a. Engage with the public and improve community relations.
  - b. Improve relations and communication with justice system and community partners.
  - c. Strengthen relations with the legislature and Judicial Council; communicate and advocate for needed funding and resources.
  - d. Partner with law schools to enhance services to court users (e.g., to give students experience, inspire the next generation of public servants and legal professionals).
  - e. Collaborate with partners to improve behavioral health (mental health and substance use) and homelessness services and programs (e.g., Mobile Court for people experiencing homelessness).
  - f. Improve accessibility to therapeutic courts (e.g., combine collaborative courts under a single umbrella).

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## Long Range Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1: The Court will build and maintain effective relations with state and local stakeholders and the legal community.

Strategy 1: Continue to strengthen existing and form new relationships to meet common goals and address collective or mutually beneficial needs.

Strategy 2: Collaborate with stakeholders and the legal community to enhance delivery of services and operational efficiency.

Strategy 3: Improve communication and appropriate data/information sharing across agencies.

### Goal 2: The Court will secure sufficient funding and resources to meet the needs of court users and to operate efficiently and effectively.

Strategy 1: Communicate, discuss, and advocate for the Court's needs, interests, and priorities.

Strategy 2: Use data and information to demonstrate fiscal stewardship and support funding requests.

Strategy 3: Pursue grant opportunities to support and expand programs and services.

### Goal 3: The Court will collaborate with stakeholders to achieve effective justice system outcomes for litigants and families.

Strategy 1: Strengthen the Court's collaborative court programs and services.

Strategy 2: Use data to evaluate the effectiveness of court and community-based programs and services.

Strategy 3: Foster collaborative relationships with stakeholders to bridge gaps in services available to court users.

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## SFA5: Transform Court Culture & Develop a Team for the Future

**Description:** To be a future-ready organization, the Court must continue to change, evolve, and improve. Specifically, the Court must continue to develop its culture, be more agile, and prepare employees for the future. Adapting to changing circumstances, strengthening the culture, and continuing to build and reinforce a collaborative and talented team of judicial officers and court employees are priorities for the future.

An organization's culture is a collection of attitudes, values, norms, and behaviors created and shared by everyone. Transforming organizational culture requires shifting to, reshaping, and institutionalizing new ways of thinking, behaving, working, and delivering court services. As the Court works to develop its culture, it will, among other things: (a) prioritize service to the public; (b) embrace change, innovation, and continuous improvement; (c) develop agile and fluid structures and practices; (d) use reliable data and information to inform leadership, management, and administrative decisions; and (e) demonstrate accountability and transparency in the use of public resources.

The Court also will continue to develop a team of judicial officers and court employees who are: (a) dedicated to public service; (b) collaborative, engaged and satisfied; and (c) educated and trained to serve and perform at the highest levels. The Court's priorities, among others, include: (a) modernizing workplace (HR and management) policies and practices, (b) prioritizing employee well-being, (c) providing training, development, and career advancement opportunities, (d) developing a safe, welcoming, and engaging work culture, and (e) advocating for competitive pay and benefits.

In sum, the focus of this SFA is to modernize the Court's culture to meet future demands and ensure the team and workplace are future-ready.

**Survey Findings:** Court employee and judicial officer survey respondents provided the following suggestions to improve court culture and build a future-ready team and workplace.

1. High Improvement Priority: Court employee and judicial officer survey respondents rated **Workplace/Workforce Practices** as the highest priority improvement area (out of 15). This improvement area included: modernize human resources, management, and workplace policies and practices (e.g., transform recruitment, hiring, retention practices); prioritize employee well-being; refine, expand, or redefine jobs; improve and expand hybrid and/or flexible work arrangements; provide training, development, and career growth and advancement opportunities; provide competitive pay/benefits; implement equitable practices (e.g., hiring, training and development, advancement opportunities); and build an inclusive, welcoming, and engaging culture.
2. Court employees and judicial officers provided the following improvement suggestions related to this SFA. A court of the future will benefit from goals related to these matters.
  - a. Workplace Improvements / Workforce Development suggestions included:
    - Provide competitive pay and benefits (e.g., tuition reimbursement, childcare assistance).
    - Improve the recruitment and hiring processes.
    - Foster a positive and supportive team culture.
    - Foster a sense of purpose and connection across the Court; build relationships and networks.
    - Invest in training, development, and educational opportunities.

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- Cross-train staff across different job functions
  - Develop pathways for career development and advancement; prepare for impending retirements through succession planning.
  - Improve and expand hybrid and flexible work schedules.
  - Improve employee morale, engagement, and well-being (e.g., employee recognition and appreciation, employee well-being).
  - Enhance internal communication; more transparent information sharing from management and leadership.
- b. Suggestions to improve Leadership / Management included:
- Train and develop leaders and managers (e.g., contemporary leadership and management practices, communication skills, critical and strategic thinking, problem solving, agility).
  - Implement fair promotional practices and treat employees equitably.
  - Modernize and consolidate the organizational and management structures (e.g., restructure, merge divisions, critically review and change needed positions; reduce the size of management); develop agile/fluid structures and practices that allow the Court to adapt and pivot as needed.
  - Increase transparency and information sharing.
  - Lead with empathy and respect; value and appreciate employees; be visible and approachable.
  - Use data to make informed decisions.
  - Transform HR into a supportive unit (rather than a compliance unit).
3. Additional improvement suggestions provided by employees through the Court's 2024 Employee Engagement Survey are as follows:
- c. Invest in employees (e.g., career development, compensation and benefits, and training and development).
  - d. Improve processes and balance workloads, which include having adequate staffing levels, distributing workloads evenly; improving teamwork and back-up support; standardizing, modernizing, and automating work processes and procedures; involving staff in making procedural changes.
  - e. Enhance work environment, court culture, and management (e.g., work-life balance, flexible/hybrid work arrangements, update antiquated policies, solicit input from and involve employees; follow through on suggestions; be respectful of all employees; be more transparent in decision making; provide timely feedback/improve performance management system).

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## Long Range Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1: The Court will be an employer of choice.

Strategy 1: Simplify, streamline, and modernize recruitment practices.

Strategy 2: Strive to provide competitive pay and benefits.

Strategy 3: Promote the important and meaningful work of the Court and service to the public.

Strategy 4: Offer other benefits and work arrangements that job candidates value and seek.

### Goal 2: Judicial officers and court employees will be dedicated, engaged, and satisfied.

Strategy 1: Expand cross-training and skill development for employees.

Strategy 2: Orient / educate judicial officers on matters pertaining to their respective case assignments.

Strategy 3: Expand and promote employee career growth and advancement opportunities.

Strategy 4: Engage judicial officers and employees in making changes and improvements that affect them.

Strategy 5: Increase participation of judges and managers in local and statewide improvement opportunities.

Strategy 6: Foster teamwork and collaboration within and across departments or areas of the Court.

Strategy 7: Demonstrate appreciation for employees and the value they add to the Court through their service and accomplishments.

Strategy 8: Evaluate and balance workloads across the Court.

Strategy 9: Increase transparency and information sharing.

### Goal 3: The Court's culture (i.e., attitudes, values, norms/behaviors) will embrace innovations and continuous improvement.

Strategy 1: Pursue technological and other innovative programs, services, and practices that enhance service delivery and improve court operations.

Strategy 2: Encourage and reward creative thinking and experimentation.

Strategy 3: Solicit and implement suggestions that streamline operations, enhance services, and increase the effectiveness of the Court.

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Strategy 4: Develop agile organizational and management structures and practices across the Court.

Strategy 5: Use data and analytics to allocate resources to areas of the Court with the greatest need.

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## SFA6: Elevate Court Infrastructure

**Description:** The Court will elevate and advocate for improvements to facilities, including but not limited to: courthouses, space, security, parking, technology, equipment, and cyber security. The Court is committed to maintaining an environment across all court locations that builds the public's trust and optimizes accessibility, service to the public, and space. This includes evaluating, communicating, and advocating for facility needs, repurposing and optimizing space, and ensuring all facilities and offices are safe, professional, clean, and accessible.

Having an optimal technological infrastructure also is imperative for the future. The Court's technological infrastructure (e.g., case management system, Wi-Fi, video, audio, and other equipment) must support the business of the Court, protect confidential data and information, and thwart cyber threats and attacks.

In sum, elevating and advocating for the Court's needs relative to an effective infrastructure will be a high priority for the Court in the years ahead.

**Survey Findings:** Court user, external partner, and judicial officer/court employee survey respondents provided the following improvement suggestions related to the Court's infrastructure.

1. High Improvement Priorities: External partner and judicial officer/employee survey respondents rated **Safety/ Security** as the second highest improvement priority (out of 15). Court users were not asked this question. This improvement area included: ensure the personal safety (health, physical) of all who work in/use the courthouses; improve security.

**Technology** was rated the third highest improvement priority by external partner respondents and the fifth highest by judicial officers/employee respondents (out of 15). Court users were not asked this question. The technology improvement priority category included: invest in/use existing & future technologies that will enhance access, services, & court operations; enhance cyber and data security.

2. Survey respondents provided many suggestions for improving the Court's infrastructure. A court of the future will benefit from goals related to these areas.

- a. Facilities, Space, Parking:

- Update and modernize facilities (e.g., make more welcoming and professional; easier to access and navigate – better signage, improved accessibility, more community/ conference areas, more outdoor space for employees, improve / clean bathrooms).
- Improve elevators and improve movement of people through facilities.
- Upgrade, clean, and maintain courtrooms, public areas, and offices.
- Evaluate facility and space needs and optimize/repurpose space (e.g., reduce or expand footprint as needed).
- Provide adequate and free/affordable parking for employees, jurors, etc.
- Upgrade furniture (e.g., ergonomic chairs, desks).
- Improve Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC)/air temperature and quality.

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- b. Security: Improve courthouse safety and security (e.g., beyond metal detectors such as surveillance cameras, more deputies, counter security, separate employee entrance).
- c. Technology:
- Upgrade equipment (e.g., printers, computers, laptops, vending machines).
  - Upgrade/strengthen Wi-Fi.
  - Improve technology capacity (e.g., case management system, e-Filing, data).
  - Strengthen and continuously improve cyber security and safeguard confidential data and information.

### Long Range Goals and Strategies

#### Goal 1: The Court's facilities and space will meet the needs of the public, stakeholders, judicial officers, and employees.

Strategy 1: Continue to communicate the Court's facility and space needs to the Judicial Council and County leadership.

Strategy 2: Collaborate with the County and State to develop plans for future growth.

Strategy 3: Advocate for modernizing and maintaining an environment across all court locations that builds trust and confidence in the Court.

Strategy 4: Improve the use of, or repurpose, existing space.

#### Goal 2: The Court will provide a safe and secure environment for all who use, work with, or work for the Court.

Strategy 1: Work with/ collaborate with Sheriff's Department to clarify roles and evaluate and improve courthouse safety and security.

Strategy 2: Regularly review and strengthen the Court's safety and security protocols and practices in collaboration with the Sheriff's department and stakeholders,

Strategy 3: Train / educate judicial officers and staff on updated safety procedures and protocols

Strategy 4: Advocate for a sufficient number of security personnel in and around court facilities.

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Goal 3: The Court's technologies and technological infrastructure will support the work of the Court, enhance access, and improve services to court users.

Strategy 1: Assess and plan for future technological needs.

Strategy 2: Explore, test, and invest in new and emerging technologies that help meet needs.

Strategy 3: Educate judicial officers and staff on using existing and new technologies and to protect against cyber-attacks.

Strategy 4: Maintain and protect the Court's digital infrastructure, systems, and data from cyber risks and threats.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Trends Analysis

Below is a summary of the trends analysis which helped inform planning members of the external and internal landscapes and document likely future implications for the Court. Included is a summary of demographic and economic trends, likely future implications, and two plausible future scenarios facing the Court.

#### Summary of Trends

##### 1. Demographic Trends

- a. Population Growth: Riverside County is the 4<sup>th</sup> most populated county (out of 58) in California. The County's population is one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. From 2010 to 2023, The County's population increased 14% and Indio's population increased 22% (compared to the US and California's population growth of 9% and 5% respectively).
- b. Ethnicity: Over half of Riverside County's population identifies as Hispanic/Latino (52%) compared to the US and California at 20% and 40% respectively.
- c. Language Spoken at Home: 50% of the population in Moreno Valley and 54% in Indio speak languages other than English in the home (compared to 22% for the US and 44% for California).
- d. Age: Thirty-three (33%) of population in Palm Springs, and 19% of the population in Indio, is 65 years and above (compared to the US and California at 18% and 16% respectively). Moreno Valley and Murrieta have considerably younger populations with 27% of population under 18 years of age (compared to the US and California at 22% each).
- e. Households with Access to Internet: A high majority of households in Riverside County have computers and/or mobile devices – upwards of 96% or higher for Riverside County, Riverside City, Moreno Valley, and Murrieta (compared to 94% and 96% for the US and California respectively). Indio and Palm Springs are slightly below California with only 95% and 94% respectively having computers/mobile devices. Additionally, a large majority of households across the County have internet subscriptions (over 90% of the population) except in Palm Springs where only 89% of the population have internet subscriptions (compared to 88% of the US population and 92% of California's population).
- f. Education: 93% of the population in Murrieta and Palm Springs are high school graduates or above (compared to 89% for the US and 84% for California). The population in Indio and Moreno Valley have the lowest proportion of high school or higher graduates in Riverside County with 77% and 79% respectively. Of the Riverside cities tracked, Palm Springs has the highest proportion of population (44%) with bachelor's degrees or above compared to the US at 34% and California at 36%. The population in Moreno Valley and Indio have the lowest proportions of population (of the areas tracked) with Bachelor's degrees or higher (17% and 19% respectively).

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## 2. Economic Trends

- g. Unemployment: Riverside County's unemployment rate has tracked closely with the unemployment rate for the entire state since 2020. In October 2024, Riverside County's unemployment rate was 5.6% and the unemployment rates for the US and California were 4.1% and 5.4% respectively.
- h. Median Household Income: Of the cities tracked across Riverside County, Murrieta had the highest median household income of \$107,000 and Palm Springs and Indio had the lowest median household income of \$67,500 and \$68,500 respectively (compared to the US of \$75,000 and California of \$92,000).
- i. Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing: Housing costs in California are considerably higher than the cost of housing across the US. Of the cities tracked in Riverside County, the median value of housing is highest in Murrieta and lowest in Indio.
- j. Median value of Rent: Murrieta has the highest median value of gross rent and Indio has the lowest followed closely by Palm Springs. All values of the cities tracked in Riverside County are higher than the median value of rent for the US.
- k. Persons in Poverty: Of the cities tracked for this analysis, Palm Springs, Riverside City, Moreno Valley, and Indio have higher proportions of individuals living in poverty than the US and California. Murrieta has the lowest proportion of individuals living in poverty.

### Long-Term Implications:

The purpose of a trends analysis is to ultimately consider the long-term implications – or the effects of the trends – on an organization. Identifying long-term implications requires forward thinking – being prospective – and anticipating the effects of the trends on the Court. Below are likely future implications facing the Court as discussed by members of the Strategic Planning Committee. Many of these areas are not mutually exclusive. That is, they are not discrete; there is overlap among many areas as the Court works to fulfill its mission.

- 1. Increasing Service Needs and Expectations: Riverside County's population is growing at a fast pace resulting in increased service demands and higher caseloads and workloads. The effects of population growth are especially felt in areas of the County where growth is highest including Indio, Moreno Valley, and Murrieta. As the Court prepares for the future, it must advocate for sufficient resources (e.g., judgeships, staff, facilities, technology, etc.) to meet needs and also must find ways to contain costs, increase efficiency, and streamline work processes. It will need to strengthen partnerships and relationships and continue to be agile and resilient in the years ahead, shifting and reallocating resources as needed to meet growing service needs, changing expectations, and increasing caseloads and workloads.
- 2. Access to the Court: Ensuring access for all people will be increasingly challenging for the Court with a growing and increasingly diverse population and with fewer resources. For example, there will likely be an increased need for self-help, navigational, and language services. The Court will need to be more user-friendly and understandable (e.g., use plain language). The Court also will need to enhance and optimize access to the court and information including in-person, online, and virtual services (e.g., via Zoom, text messaging, website, use of Chatbot/AI, and in-person services at physical locations across the county).

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In sum, the Court will need to continually enhance and optimize access and services (and work to reduce barriers to access such as cost, transportation, and language) for all people and especially self-represented litigants; families, the elderly, and people with lower socioeconomic means; non-English or limited English speaking persons; persons who are disabled; and people experiencing homelessness or behavioral health issues. To respond to evolving demands and expectations, the Court will need to explore and embrace new and innovative ways to: (1) enhance in-person, online, and virtual/remote access and services; (2) create new and strengthen existing partnerships, and (3) use new and evolving technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence, chatbot, etc.), to name a few.

3. Fair and Timely Resolution: With increasing caseloads and workloads, the Court will need to continue to improve how it manages cases (e.g., improve scheduling, use reliable case management data) and use innovative and effective methods for reducing backlogs (e.g., limit continuances, promote alternative dispute resolution, assess and triage cases - differentiated case management). Additionally, it will need to critically evaluate, increase consistency, and optimize the use of virtual (or remote) hearings / court proceedings and eliminate abuses, ensuring effective, timely, and fair justice to litigants. Streamlining processes and procedures (including jury management) also will be necessary to operate more efficiently and effectively.

The economy and cost of living will likely result in more fee waiver requests and more people will not be able to pay costs, fines, fees, and restitution. And, many people will not be able to afford an attorney, which will overburden the public defender system (for criminal matters) and self-help and pro bono providers (especially in family law and some civil cases).

Finally, taking steps to ensure equal justice and eliminate bias also will need to remain a high priority for the Court in the years ahead. Doing so will promote outcome and procedural fairness and build trust and confidence in the court and judicial branch.

4. Uses of Technology: Technological innovations and advances will continue into the future. Within reason and striving to minimize adverse consequences, the Court will work to maximize the use of current technologies and embrace and invest in new and emerging technologies to enhance access, improve services to court users, and operate more efficiently and effectively (without exacerbating the digital divide – leaving people behind who do not have to the Internet, or do not have or use technology).

There are many types of new technologies that will enhance access and services and help the Court operate more efficiently and effectively. Examples include strong Wi-Fi in all court locations; upgraded computers, printers, web cams, and other equipment; new and integrated case management systems; data dashboards; texting notifications and reminders; virtual / remote access for some court proceedings and some court services; chatbot on the website; kiosks to make payments and access information; presence on social media to disseminate real-time information and promote employment opportunities; and the like. Using these and other new technologies may also reduce costs and increase efficiencies for partners (e.g., virtual appearances for in-custody defendants) and will ensure the Court has tools in place – the capacity – to respond to the next crisis or emergency (e.g., run the Clerk's office remotely).

The Court will be challenged to keep up with the advances in the many types of technologies. Limited funding, high costs, rapidly changing and unproven technologies, fear of change, and lack

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of training will continue to be impediments. Failure to keep up will ultimately render the Court antiquated, less accessible, and less efficient.

The Court will continually need to strengthen data and information/computer system security and reduce risks to safeguard/protect information and thwart cyber-attacks and data breaches.

5. Workforce of the Future/Judgeships: Workforce expectations have changed significantly in recent years. Increasing workloads (doing more with less), pay and benefits that do not keep up with inflation or are below market, high numbers of retirements and turnover (e.g., loss of institutional knowledge), difficulties filling vacancies, the need to upskill and reskill the workforce, a desire for hybrid or flexible work arrangements, and more are challenges the Court will face in the future. Learning to do more with less is not sustainable and is not an acceptable long-term solution.

The Court also lacks the number of judges needed to handle the increasing workload (from filings, complex legal matters, and laws that require rework of judicial officers). Judge vacancies and/or the inability to assign judges to the desert adversely impact the work of the Court.

The Court will need to modernize workplace and workforce practices to meet the changing expectations of employees and the needs of the Court. Examples include reimagining recruitment practices (e.g., examining educational requirements), optimizing hybrid or flexible work arrangements, establishing a more relaxed yet engaging, satisfying, and fair work culture, bolstering meaningful work, providing professional development and advancement opportunities, and prioritizing employee wellbeing (e.g., reducing burnout), to name a few. In short, the Court will need to adapt workplace, leadership, and management practices and evaluate and rebalance workloads in the future to be able to attract and retain a competent, dedicated, and satisfied workforce.

6. Community Partnerships and Court/Community Programs: There is a high need for more programs and services to assist justice-involved individuals (e.g., substance use, mental health, stable and affordable housing, education, employment, food security). The Court may need to explore additional specialty / problem solving courts to help justice-involved individuals succeed. The Court also may need to establish broader community partnerships to help fill the gaps and to avoid mission creep. Working together, the Court and public and private partners can help meet burgeoning needs and develop a pathway for justice-involved individuals to comply with court orders and become productive members of society (thereby breaking the unproductive cycles and reducing recidivism).
7. Governmental Relations and Legislation: Legislative and policy / political swings wreak havoc on the Court. Some of the new legislation and unfunded mandates are a drain on the Court's already limited resources and are nearly impossible to implement without additional judges and/or staff and given the unreasonable timelines.

The Court will benefit by becoming more proactive and strengthening relationships with state and local legislative, executive branch, and judicial branch leaders to address regional concerns, advocate for needed justice system reform, and influence legislation and policy that will improve the system.

8. Public Trust and Confidence: Trust and confidence in public institutions continue to decline. However, according to a recent [news release - 2024 survey](#) by the National Center for State Courts, “nearly two-thirds of Americans express trust and confidence in America’s state courts. This is the second consecutive year that the trust barometer has moved up.”

Even with this positive news, there is more work to be done. For the most part, the public does not understand the three, separate and independent branches of government and what courts can and cannot do. Thus, the Court will need to continue to educate, reach out to, and engage the public as well as demonstrate fairness, transparency, and accountability (for the use of public resources) to build trust. The Court will need to use new and innovative approaches to reach and influence diverse populations (e.g., use social media, rely on litigants / family members telling their stories). The Court will benefit from working collaboratively with justice system and community partners to strengthen the public’s trust in the Court and justice system.

9. Austere Environment / Budget / Resources: California is operating in an austere fiscal environment, which will have significant ramifications for the Court. While the Court must continue to advocate for sufficient resources, it will need to find new and different – innovative and creative – ways to serve the public and timely and fairly resolve legal matters with existing or shrinking resources.

Future Scenarios

Below are two plausible scenarios facing the Court of the future. The first is a desirable scenario, one where the Court is anticipating and responding effectively to external and internal trends thereby enhancing services to the public and improving overall court performance. The second is an undesirable scenario where the Court is not responding proactively or effectively to the changes in the external and internal environments.

TABLE 1: Scenario 1 – Desirable / Optimistic Future
<p>The Court is anticipating, adapting, and responding effectively to the changing landscape. The Court is making needed improvements. Below is a desirable future scenario for the Court.</p> <p>The Court:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Is responsive to the needs of communities across the County. The Court is nimble and easy to access, understand, and navigate (e.g., it is taking services to the people; providing easy access to information and services; providing language, self-help, and navigational assistance, etc.).</li> <li>b. Is known for its excellent customer service. Court employees are professional, respectful, knowledgeable, and helpful in large and small offices across the County.</li> <li>c. Is using technologies efficiently and effectively. It has an effective / updated case management system, has implemented e-Filing, is using remote technologies for appropriate virtual hearings/court proceedings and virtual court services, is using social media platforms to provide real time information to the public and recruit for court positions, has an updated website and is using kiosks (e.g., with informational videos and instructions to navigate the court in multiple languages, includes AI, etc.).</li> <li>d. Is evaluating and balancing workloads, streamlining work processes, refining and optimizing remote work opportunities, providing training, development, and career advancement opportunities, and</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1:  
Scenario 1 – Desirable / Optimistic Future**

rewarding and recognizing staff. In sum, the Court is modernizing management and HR practices to reflect the new future of work. The Court is successfully recruiting employees and retention and satisfaction levels are high.

- e. Has developed effective and consistent practices and procedures for virtual hearings / court proceedings eliminating abuses, confusion, and other difficulties associated with hybrid hearings.
- f. Is providing fair, equal, and timely justice. Cases are being resolved in a fair and timely manner. Backlogs have been reduced.
- g. Is enhancing and expanding court programs including problem solving/specialty courts, wrap-around services, and pre-litigation problem solving (e.g., alternative dispute resolution).
- h. Is investing in its technological infrastructure, which is enhancing access to the court and court information and court operations.
- i. Has enough interpreters, court reporters, and other key staff to maintain effective operations and provide high levels of service to the public.
- j. Is reimagining recruitment efforts to attract talented people interested in serving the public and doing meaningful work.
- k. Is improving its culture. Judicial officers and employees are embracing change and innovation. They are involved in making improvements. Employees are feeling valued, engaged, and satisfied. Everyone is proud to work for the Court.
- l. Has knowledgeable and trained judicial officers who are effective in their respective assignments.
- m. Is collaborating with private and public partners to provide access points in communities and fill other service gaps across the County.
- n. Has a voice with legislators to influence needed changes. Laws are updated or passed to provide acceptable and effective remedies.
- o. Is communicating effectively with and educating the public about the role of courts, the Court's services, and information available to help them do their court business (e.g., electronic payments; e-file, short videos about court processes, etc.). The services and resources are helpful to court users. The Court is functioning better as a result.
- p. Mirrors the population across the county. That is, the composition of the bench and workforce reflect the make-up of the county's population.
- q. Has improved resources and adequate staffing.
- r. Is using limited resources prudently / responsibly and is anticipating future fluctuations in funding.

**TABLE 2:  
Scenario 2 – Undesirable Future**

The Court is struggling to adapt to the changing landscape. It is not anticipating and is not responding effectively to increasing expectations, pressures, and workloads. An undesirable future scenario is below.

- a. The Court is in a reactive posture. Everything feels like a crisis. Cases are taking longer to process. The process is perceived as unfair and untimely.
- b. The Court is less accessible and user-friendly. Service hours have been reduced, and the level of customer service has dropped. The Court has scaled back many of its in-person, online, and virtual services (e.g., self-help, language assistance, court hearings). Court users are having difficulties accessing and navigating the Court. The information available is out of date and not helpful. Efforts to educate the public have ceased.
- c. Many judicial officers and court employees are resisting needed changes and improvements. They don't understand the need for change and are not involved in making improvements. For example, many are resisting new technologies and streamlined and consistent processes and procedures.
- d. The Court is not anticipating or responding to the evolving needs of the population across the county. For example, the Court is unable to provide language assistance to court users other than in Spanish.
- e. The Court has been unsuccessful advocating for enough judges. Vacancies persist. Courtrooms are empty; backlogs are accruing. Judicial officers are overwhelmed. Some judicial officers do not like their assignments; some calendars are deemed as undesirable.
- f. Additionally, there are not enough staff to process cases. Case management practices are ineffective and inefficient (e.g., too many cases in collaborative courts). Services are delayed (e.g., evaluations, in the Clerk's Office).
- g. The Court is struggling to recruit/hire for entry level positions and turnover is high. Many employees lack needed training and are leaving for higher pay, manageable workloads, more flexibility, and a better work culture.
- h. Court employees are overworked, overwhelmed, and burned out. Those employees that remain are taking additional leave to deal with the stress and burnout. Coverage in courtrooms and court offices and service levels are adversely affected. Justice system and community partners have also been adversely affected.
- i. The judicial branch has lost credibility. The public has lost trust and confidence in the branch, the court, and judges. All are viewed as politically motivated rather than independent, fair, and free from bias. Civil matters are opting out of the public justice system and are moving to administrative or private judging organizations. Criminal matters are delayed. Our democracy – our civil society and the rule of law – is in jeopardy/being threatened (e.g., street justice).
- j. The Court lacks the resources needed to meet existing and evolving demands and deliver quality justice and services (e.g., funding, technology, judicial officers, employees). Advocacy efforts have been scaled back. The Court does not have the support or resources it needs to address local needs.

## Appendix B: Strengths, Areas for Improvement, Opportunities and Potential Threats, Challenges, and Vulnerabilities

Strengths	Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Customer Service</u>: court users gave high ratings on court performance (accessibility, timeliness, fairness, etc.) and assistance received from court employees</li> <li>2. <u>Self-help services</u>: help court users with their court business/legal matter</li> <li>3. <u>Remote / virtual court proceedings</u>: reduce costs and increase convenience (access) for litigants</li> <li>4. <u>Fair</u>: the Court is perceived as fair by litigants</li> <li>5. <u>Workforce</u>: low turnover; staff are generally satisfied; staff are interested in learning, growing, advancing; the workforce reflects the community and is multi-generational</li> <li>6. <u>Judges/Staff</u>: want to be able to do more/ enhance services; high drive to do better and continuously improve</li> <li>7. <u>Leadership</u>: positive feedback from the bench on transparency re: budget, etc.</li> <li>8. <u>Culture of Resilience</u>: The court has navigated challenging times; it has survived budget, COVID, resource challenges</li> <li>9. <u>Fiscal</u>: The Court has found a way to manage with limited fiscal resources/budget</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Customer Service</u>: long wait times for phone calls</li> <li>2. <u>Self-Help Services</u>: demand for services is increasing; more litigants need assistance</li> <li>3. <u>Timely Resolution / Court Operations</u>: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Improvements are needed; timely resolution should be a priority</li> <li>b. Need to manage juror summons / jurors more effectively; have a high failure to appear (FTA) with jurors</li> <li>c. Need to increase operational efficiency (e.g., streamline / reengineer work/work processes across the Court/in the Clerk's Office; use technology)</li> <li>d. Need to better manage (allocate, reallocate, shift, be fluid) judicial and staff resources to balance caseloads / workloads</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. <u>Remote/virtual court proceedings</u>: need to refine/improve/use consistent practices where virtual proceedings are allowed and effective</li> <li>5. <u>Technology</u>: need to keep pace with evolving technologies (e.g., AI, cyber security, operational innovations/automation)</li> <li>6. <u>Judicial Education / Development</u>: have a younger bench; need to educate judges and develop them to step into leadership roles</li> <li>7. <u>Workforce</u>: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Need more training and development, career and succession planning (younger workforce, next generation of leaders)</li> <li>b. Refine / expand hybrid / remote work, or alternative / flexible work arrangements</li> <li>c. Improve competitive pay and flexible benefits/options</li> <li>d. Improve employee morale (e.g., reduce/balance workloads; listen to input; follow-through/follow-up on ideas)</li> <li>e. Improve communication with staff – share the good things happening across the Court</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Strengths	Weaknesses/Areas for Improvement
	<p>8. <u>Facilities / Security / Parking</u>: improve safety security; strengthen protocols/practices; better parking for jurors</p> <p>9. <u>External Relations</u>: need to improve relations with justice and community partners and stakeholders</p> <p>10. <u>Culture</u>: need to reshape court culture based on vision and core values (be innovative, proactive, reduce stress/burnout); make the Court a satisfying and engaging place to work, for judges and employees</p>

**Opportunities:** The Court sees many future opportunities. They include the following:

1. Enhance Access and Services – Improve the Court User Experience
  - Enhance Client / court user education
  - Ensure easy Access – enhance services, assistance, and resources for self-represented court users
  - Improve in-Person and virtual services / access
  - Increase bilingual staff to assist litigants
  - Leverage technology to improve and expand court services (e.g., AI Chatbot, virtual translation services, expanded remote proceedings)
  
2. Improve Operational Efficiency and Timely Resolution
  - Streamline / Reengineer work processes; reduce/eliminate manual processes; automate where possible
  - Improve efficiency – strengthen procedures and develop training/educational resources
  - Leverage technology to improve efficiency and the court user experience
  - Improve the juror experience / jury duty – usage, electronic notification, appear remotely for voir dire, improve parking
  - Be data informed / use data to drive decisions
  - Expand use of technology – use new technology to simplify / automate data entry
  - Hold litigants accountable / require compliance with orders to reduce recidivism / public safety
  - Improve and expand virtual hearings/proceedings – optimize and enhance consistency in using virtual proceedings
  - Ensure timely resolution of disputes
  - Increase compliance with orders to reduce recidivism
  
3. Technology to Enhance Access, Services, and Operational Efficiency
  - Leverage technology to work more effectively – determine how the Court can use AI
  - Expand and implement technology / digitalize records
  - Strengthen cyber security

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4. Improve Infrastructure – Facilities, Security
    - Improve facilities
    - Strengthen building and individual safety/security
    - Provide safe and secure court environment
  5. Proactive, Innovative, and Satisfying Culture
    - Eliminate crisis-mode culture
    - Use analytics; improve data
    - Use innovations/be innovative in improving access, meeting service needs, and use of technology (AI, work processes, virtual services and proceedings)
  6. Leadership and Management Practices
    - Develop future judicial and administrative leaders
    - Use analytics to communicate with/educate internally and externally
  7. Workforce of the Future – be an Employer of Choice to Attract and Retain Talent/ be a Sought-After Employer
    - Transform / improve recruitment practices
    - Be a leading court in training, development, and career advancement opportunities (develop / communicate career paths/develop career plans)
    - Enhance staff engagement / empowerment
    - Provide rewards/competitive pay and benefit options
    - Develop a team-oriented workforce
    - Improve morale
    - Improve hybrid work/expand opportunities- refine hybrid work opportunities
    - Increase employee appreciation
    - Prioritize work life balance
    - Conduct succession planning – do succession planning in departments to prepare for impending retirements
  8. Stakeholder, Partner, and Community Relations and Engagement
    - Stay abreast of community needs
    - Engage and collaborate with partners and stakeholders
    - Use social media platforms to communicate information
  9. Public Education and Engagement
    - Educate the public about the Court and judicial branch
    - Involve, engage, listen to public feedback
    - Communicate with the public in real time

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**Potential Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities: Below** are potential threats, challenges, and vulnerabilities facing the Court in upcoming years.

10. Growth and Expectations: keeping up with county growth and growing expectations and needs (e.g., number of judges, staffing levels, self-help needs; language needs/language access – shortage of interpreters and specialized court staff; etc.); people do not understand how to navigate the court system
11. Pace of Change: keeping up with the pace of change – expectations, legislative, voter initiatives, changing technologies, environmental pressures, increasing costs, changing workforce, etc.
12. Economic Volatility and Disparities: instability in funding; difficult to plan; cost barriers; growing economic gap between wealth and poor/working poor
13. Workloads/Efficiency: need to be able to manage/balance workloads; need to increase efficiency and effectiveness; need to be innovative/do things differently/better
14. Technologies/Cyber Security Threat / Vulnerabilities: emergence of new technologies; appropriate uses of technology; keeping data, information, systems safe from cyber security threats
15. Facilities and Safety / Security: safety of individuals and property; antiquated buildings (e.g., Moreno Valley Courthouse)
16. Changing Workforce: inability to attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce; loss of institutional knowledge/ brain drain – when people retire / leave; changing expectations; adequate staffing levels
17. Trust in Institutions / the Judicial Branch: eroding trust in institutions; declining credibility of / trust in the judicial branch; ethical considerations – what judges can/cannot say or do; declining public understanding and perception of the judicial branch; lack of communication and transparency; threats to American democracy
18. Legislative Actions: unintended consequences and workload associated with new legislation
19. Mission and Vision: the Court loses focus; it veers from its core purpose; future priorities and vision are unclear