

Berrien County, Michigan

# *Strategic Plan for Improving the Juvenile Justice System in Berrien County*

Presentation to Berrien County Board of Commissioners  
April 13, 2023



**BERRIEN COUNTY**  
MICHIGAN



# Convening County, Court, and Justice Leaders: A Framework for Cross-System Collaboration

- Model for a structured, multi-sector planning process.
- Cross-sector teams are using the framework to:
  - Identify local justice challenges and opportunities;
  - Prioritize solutions grounded in evidence;
  - Align resources across agencies;
  - Build a structure to sustain efforts and monitor progress/successes.

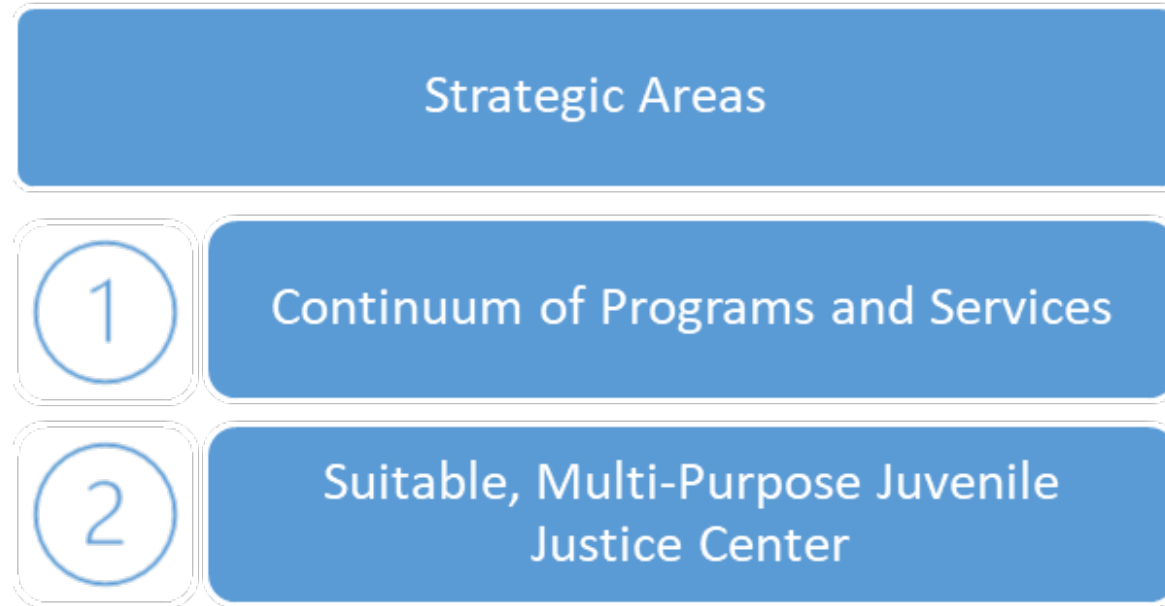
Albemarle County, VA  
Berrien County, MI  
Cambria County, PA  
Cuyahoga County, OH  
Gallatin County, MT  
Lake County, CO  
Mesa County, CO  
Navajo County, AZ  
Potter County, PA  
Rockdale County, GA

# Strategic Planning Process – Berrien County

1. Regular Planning Meetings – County and Court Leadership
2. Juvenile Justice Planning Forums (w/Court, County, & JJ Partners/Stakeholders)
  - September 15 – 16, 2022
  - January 27, 2023
3. Strategic Plan – **“Our Path Forward”**



# Stakeholder Recommendations: Goals, Strategies, and Priorities



# Strategic Area 1: Continuum of Programs & Services

## Goals and 2023 Priorities

- Goals: Berrien County will:
  - Goal 1 – Keep lower risk juvenile offenders out of the juvenile justice system.
  - Goal 2 – Provide an expanded continuum of community and juvenile justice services and programs, including prevention, early intervention, and treatment that meet the needs of youth and families.
  - Goal 3 – Achieve improved outcomes/results with youth involved in the juvenile justice system, resulting in reduced recidivism.
- 2023 Priorities –
  - Work with partners and/or with existing or new workgroups to make improvements in the following areas:
    - School Justice Initiative
    - Behavioral Health Services
    - Parental Engagement and Involvement
    - Recruitment and Retention for All Stakeholder Agencies

## Strategic Area 2: Suitable, Multi-Purpose Juvenile Justice Center Goals and 2023 Priorities

- Goals:
  - Goal 1 – The County will provide a suitable, multipurpose Juvenile Justice Center that is easily accessible and meets the needs of youth and families.
  - Goal 2 – Court, juvenile justice partner and community services/programs will be provided from a centralized hub/location in Berrien County with additional services provided to other parts of the county virtually and via satellite offices.
- 2023 Priorities –
  - Long term facilities planning
  - Short term/immediate facilities and staffing improvements

# Next Steps

- Strategic Area 1 –
  - Convene updated juvenile justice stakeholder team with ongoing representation from critical community members and services.
  - Enhance recruitment opportunities for new staff while continuing to upskill existing staff.
- Strategic Area 2 –
  - Continue site design efforts with Wightman/DLR Group for a new juvenile justice center.
  - Review immediate facilities needs at current site as required for operation of the facility until a new center is viable.

# County/Court Partnership

What we are asking from the Board of Commissioners:

1. Continued collaboration regarding juvenile justice needs in the community
2. Develop a long-term facilities strategy for a Juvenile Justice Center that will meet the needs of youth and families in Berrien County
3. Assist in funding &/or pursue grant opportunities for high priority areas – services and facilities – that will increase the JJ system's effectiveness and enhance public safety (e.g., prevention efforts, lower recidivism, etc.).