



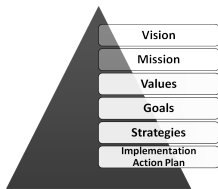
## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Introduction

Dear Cass County Community Member,

Cass County has engaged Management Partners, a consulting firm that works with local governments throughout the country, to facilitate a five-year strategic plan. Because your opinion is valued, Management Partners is conducting a community survey to gather feedback and input from members of the Cass County community.

Strategic planning, as illustrated in the graphic below, involves establishing a vision for the future; a clear mission; articulating the organization's values; establishing goals; identifying priority strategies and critical success factors; and creating an action plan to ensure timely results.



We would appreciate receiving your input about Cass County strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, as well as your feedback about a vision and mission statement, and values as we begin the strategic planning process. This survey will allow you to share your opinions and ideas, and will help the County Commissioners, other elected officials, and the County staff understand what is most important to residents, property owners, businesses, board and commission members, and other stakeholders.

Your response will be anonymous. The survey will only take about fifteen minutes to complete. Management Partners will prepare a summary of key themes from survey respondents and no answers will be directly identified with any individual who completes the survey.

Please complete this survey by Monday, January 15, 2018. If you have any questions or need assistance survey, please contact Sam Lieberman at [slieberman@managementpartners.com](mailto:slieberman@managementpartners.com).

If you are completing a hard copy version of the survey, please return it by mail to:

Management Partners c/o Sam Lieberman  
1730 Madison Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45206

Thank you for your participation and ideas about this important matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Ziliak, Chairman

Cass County Board of Commissioners



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Strengths

1. Strengths are existing positive qualities that will enable the County to achieve its vision for the future. For each item below, indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree that it is a Cass County strength.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
County parks and trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good quality of life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Affordable housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of community members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural beauty of the area/Natural resources, including over 200 lakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rich history	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong 4H group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Southwestern Michigan College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No traffic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity and location (South Bend/Kalamazoo/Lake Michigan/Chicago region)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farming and agricultural community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People who are passionate about living here	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dedicated Cass County employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cass County Economic Development Corporation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Amtrak rail service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Weaknesses

2. Weaknesses are qualities or issues that prevent the County from achieving its vision and full potential. Generally, weaknesses are perceived as negative and should be addressed, minimized or eliminated. For each item below, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree that it represents a county weakness.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Lack of industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of resident engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Condition of County infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of communication about accomplishments and issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inability to reach consensus and move forward on key projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of proximity to a U.S. highway (interstate)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of a formal process for county and township collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stagnant tax base	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of employee pensions and health care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inability to fund large capital projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of willingness to invest in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aging population; young people leave and do not return	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unfunded liability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dwindling fund balance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Opportunities

3. New opportunities may exist as unrealized or untapped potential within the community. These opportunities, if acted upon, will enhance the County in the future. For each item below, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree that it represents an opportunity for Cass County.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strengthen partnerships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote business growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foster downtown development in townships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase workforce development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make Cass County a destination/increase tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waterfront development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote existing economic development corridors in the County	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repurpose/reuse of the historic courthouse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand and connect the existing trail system in the parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expand access to broadband service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Challenges

4. Outside forces and on-going community trends may bring unfavorable situations or changes to Cass County. These challenges may undercut the stability and success of the County and should be addressed. For each item below, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree that it represents one of Cass County's challenges.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Unfunded mandates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing funds needed to support the retirement fund	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing health care costs for county employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loss of institutional knowledge due to employee retirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poverty in pockets of the County	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruitment of good employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Priority Areas

5. Please indicate, the areas you consider to be the most important for Cass County to focus on over the next five years by ranking the topic areas from 1 to 12, with one being the top priority and 12 being the lowest priority. If you have a priority area that is not represented below, include the Other option and go to question # 6 to indicate your "other" priority area.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Repurpose/reuse of the historic Courthouse
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Economic development and business expansion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Park amenities and lake access
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Long-term financial planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Job growth and job readiness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Local and regional partnerships and collaboration
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Service delivery
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	County volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Community and special events
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Tourism development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Policy development
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	Other



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Future Focus

6. Which one area of focus for the future is most important to you?

- Repurpose/reuse of the historic Courthouse
- Economic development and business expansion
- Park amenities and lake access
- Long-term financial planning
- Job growth and job readiness
- Local and regional partnerships and collaboration
- Service delivery
- County volunteers
- Community and special events
- Tourism development
- Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Vision

**A vision describes where the County is headed and is an aspirational statement of a future desired state. The current Cass County vision statement reads:**

***Cass County strives to be a place of thriving and vibrant communities and a place where people can live, work and play in a welcoming environment.***

\* 7. Is the current vision still applicable?

Yes (GO TO Question 9)

No (GO TO Question 8)





## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Vision

**A vision describes where the County is headed and is an aspirational statement of a future desired state. The current Cass County vision statement reads:**

***Cass County strives to be a place of thriving and vibrant communities and a place where people can live, work and play in a welcoming environment.***

\* 8. Please choose up to three words that best describe your vision for the future.

- Thriving
- Collaboration
- Vibrant
- Quality
- Attractive
- Welcoming
- Prospering
- Growing
- Adapting
- Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Mission

**A mission statement indicates what the County (leaders and employees) are employed to do on a daily basis. The current Cass County mission statement reads:**

***Cass County government exists to deliver fair, efficient, accessible and high quality services dedicated to the public good.***

\* 9. Does the current mission statement represent what the County should stand for and do in the future?

Yes (GO TO Question 11)

No (GO TO Question 10)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Mission

**A mission statement indicates what the County (leaders and employees) are employed to do on a daily basis. The current Cass County mission statement reads:**

***Cass County government exists to deliver fair, efficient, accessible and high quality services dedicated to the public good.***

10. Select the statements below or indicate other key words that should be included in a Cass County mission statement.

- Culture of excellence and innovation
- Model of success
- Action oriented
- Efficient services
- Committed employees
- Engaged employees
- Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Values

11. Values are statements about the core operating principles that guide the actions, behaviors and decisions of Cass County leaders and employees. Indicate the three values that are most important to you.

- Honesty
- Trust
- Confidence
- Accountability
- Outcome/results-oriented
- Critical thinking
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Community Identity
- Transparency
- Collaborative
- Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Additional Comments

12. If you have comments about the future of county, feel free to tell us your ideas.



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

### Respondent Demographics

**Tell us a little about yourself so we can further understand the needs of County's stakeholders.**

13. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

14. What is your age range?

- Under 18 years old
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Over 65 years old

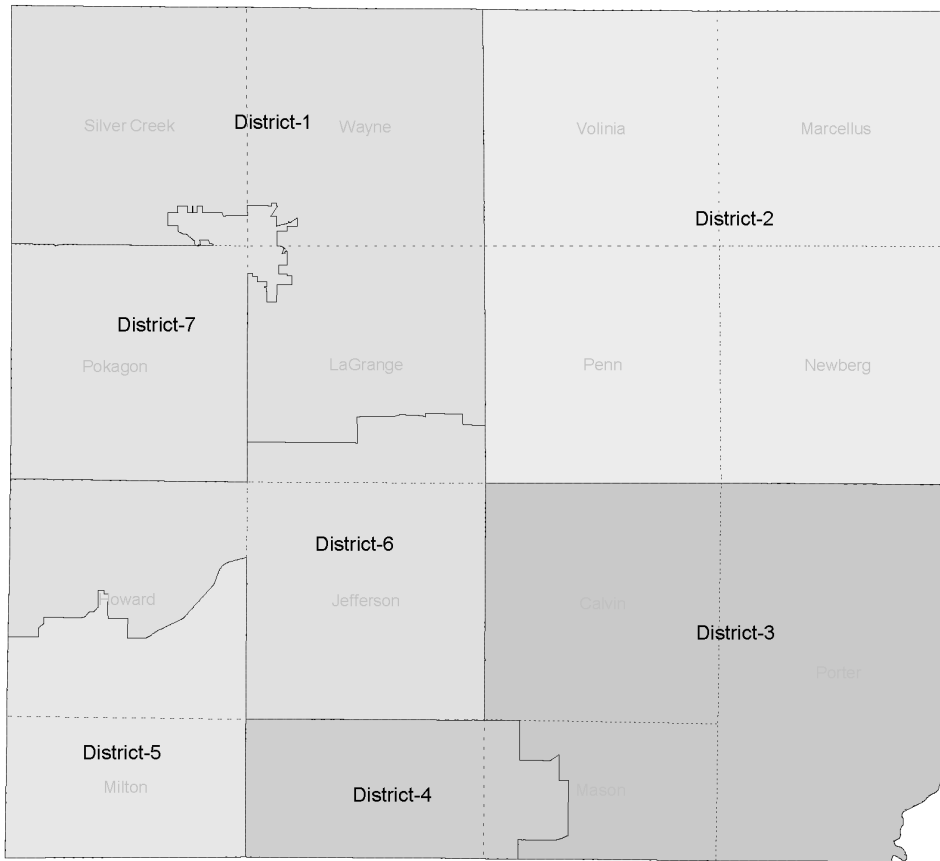
15. What is your relationship to the Cass County?

(check all that apply)

- Resident of Cass County
- Member of a board or commission
- Business owner in Cass County
- Other (please specify)



## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey



### Seven Member District

District	Population	Deviation
District-1	7,131	0.954564
District-2	7,057	0.944658
District-3	7,771	1.04023
District-4	7,558	1.01172
District-5	7,685	1.02872
District-6	7,222	0.966745
District-7	7,869	1.05335
Total	52,293	0

#### Township/City/Village Splits:

Dowagiac: District 1, 7

Howard: District 5, 6  
(along precinct line)

Mason: District 3, 4

Lagrange: District 1, 6

Seven Member Districts:  
7,470 mean population per district  
11.9% deviation: 889 population

16. Looking at the district map above, please indicate in which district you reside or work.

- District 1 - Commissioner Terry Ausra
- District 2 - Commissioner Annie File
- District 3 - Commissioner Dwight W. Dyes
- District 4 - Commissioner Roseann Marchetti
- District 5 - Commissioner Robert Ziliak
- District 6 - Commissioner Michael Grice
- District 7 - Commissioner E. Clark Cobb
- Don't Know





## Cass County Strategic Planning Community Survey

Thank you!

**Thank you for providing your opinions to help shape Cass County's strategic plan. Your responses have been stored, and you may click "Done" to exit the survey. Please encourage others that you know to also respond to this survey.**

**If you are completing a hard copy version of the survey, please return it by mail to:**

**Sam Lieberman  
Management Partners  
1730 Madison Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206**

**Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.**