

**Superior Court of California
County of Trinity**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2030

DESCRIPTION OF THE TRINITY COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT:

Since 1865 the Trinity County Superior Court has continuously occupied a two-story brick building that was constructed in 1857. The courthouse building also houses the District Attorney's Office, County Clerk/Elections Office, County Auditor, Treasurer's Office, County Administrative Office, and the Board of Supervisors. Sessions of court are also held monthly at the Trinity County Sheriff's Substation in Hayfork and bi-monthly in Mad River, at the Community Center dining hall. The driving time to Hayfork in good weather is about 45 minutes; to Mad River about 2 hours. All jury trials take place in Weaverville.

Considered a small court, Trinity is 1 of 15 two-judge courts in the State of California. The two Superior Court Judges are supported by a Court Executive Officer, Executive Assistant and the Confidential Judicial Secretary. Court Services Department includes an Operations Manager, 4 Courtroom Clerks and most recently the court added a Revenue Recovery Specialist. The Court maintains its own security which consists of a Marshal, Marshal Sergeant, three Deputy Marshals and 2 rotating, part-time deputies for main entrance security. One Full-Time Court Reporter, and a part-time Child Custody Recommending Counselor/Probate Investigator. A Child Support Commissioner and a Family Law Facilitator are currently shared one day a month with neighboring Shasta County.

VISION STATEMENT:

Provide a forum to conduct the business of the court that offers maximum access to all, instills confidence in the judicial process, and commands respect for the rule of law and our justice system.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Superior Court of Trinity County is manifold. It is (1) to provide fair and just outcomes for criminal offenders and their victims, (2) to enable prompt and fair resolution of civil disputes, and (3) to identify opportunities to improve citizens' access to justice, while building the community's confidence in the courts and insuring public understanding and respect for the American legal system.

GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

GOAL I – ACCESS, FAIRNESS, AND DIVERSITY

Issue Statement:

Constituents residing in the distant communities of the county must travel up to 3 hours one-way under optimum driving conditions, over two-lane winding roads and mountain peaks to gain access to the courthouse in Weaverville. Compounded by the County's high unemployment rate and low average incomes, use of the court is a hardship for many community members. A small but growing minority of Asian and Spanish-speaking residents needs assistance with language translation when they are at the court. The Court must develop alternatives for improving access and increasing involvement of our constituency.

Accomplishments:

1. Launched a new Remote Hearing Technology system which allows court users to remain at home or at a convenient location to appear for several hearing types.
2. Developed a new website for ease of use with additional links and resources for language access and self-help topics.
3. Increased the hours of operation for the Court's Self Help Center. In addition, the court acquired 3 public computer stations with self-help programs at no cost to the public.

Action Plan:

1. Continue to expand our court website, with additional links to language access portals and self-help programs.
2. Continue to expand on our CMS capabilities to provide an online portal for the public and our justice partners. The court is committed to establishing an e-filing system.
3. Continue searching for available technology upgrades to keep up with the modern and current tech trends.
4. Continue to find ways to provide more self-help services and increased hours of operation to the public.
5. Continue to improve the efficiency of jury facilities and procedures, such as, customizing juror appearance schedules to minimize long periods of waiting (depending on the nature of a trial), and establish a self-check-in process.

GOAL II – TRANSPARANCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Issue Statement:

To ensure transparency and accountability within the Trinity Superior Court organization, public access and information is essential both internally and externally which promotes public confidence and useful resources.

Accomplishments:

1. Trinity Superior Court revised and Improved its local rules with enhanced information and defined guidelines.
2. The Court underwent a fiscal / operational audit from the Judicial Council which is available online for public viewing.

Action Plan:

1. Continue to utilize the Court's website to post and continually update information needed to remain accountable to the public, such as budget information, Court calendars, Court statistics, etc.
2. Test the pros and cons of having a social media presence for information and news blasts relating to the Trinity Superior Court.

GOAL III – MODERNIZATION AND FACILITIES

Issue Statement:

In order to assure the public is satisfied with the quality of court's facility and business, the Court is committed to continuously improving and using best practices in security, management of personnel and facilities, and new technology. The Court must plan and implement new programs and/or processes selectively, to remain within the limitations of its budget.

Accomplishments:

1. Negotiated with the County of Trinity to Equally exchange office space to allow for a more secure location for the Marshals Department and increased space for private attorney client talks.
2. Moved Court Administration to a secured office with a pass through window to ensure protection of sensitive and/or confidential information.
3. New security cameras and upgraded video capabilities throughout the inside and outside of the courthouse.
4. Technology upgrades throughout the court occupied areas.

5. Upgraded to a web based case management system(CMS) and a web based jury program. The new CMS allowed the court to completely move to a paperless system. The new Jury System will provide email and text notification to jurors.
6. Added online payment capabilities.
7. Moved all collection activities to the courthouse.

Action Plan:

1. Find resources to upgrade the outdated courtrooms with trial court funds as well as to request assistance from the Judicial Council Facilities division to modernize the floors, hard surfaces, gallery furniture and a new layout to ensure judicial security.
2. Explore the possibility of building a new courthouse.
3. Continue to review, circulate for comment any new updated local rules of court annually.

GOAL IV – QUALITY OF JUSTICE AND SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

Issue Statement:

Superior Court of Trinity County strives to deliver the highest quality of justice and service to the public. It is committed to affording respect and dignity for all who use the court, to assisting unrepresented litigants, to using court procedures and operations that efficiently dispose of cases, and to exhibiting professionalism throughout its operations in a manner that instills and retains confidence in the judiciary.

Action Plan:

1. Continue to provide on-going training to all court employees for developing and improving performance in all task areas, including customer service.
2. Develop a succession plan so that as employees leave or retire, a seamless transition is possible to maintain a high level of service and performance.
3. Continue to meet or exceed continuing education requirements for judges and staff.
4. Provide resources for judges to participate in state-level planning for improvement of the judicial branch in a manner that is attentive to small-court needs.
5. Foster good relations with local and adjacent county bar associations, to develop and grow a reliable group of attorneys regularly practicing in this community who will deliver excellent representation for court users.
6. Ensure that all practicing lawyers appearing before the Court are complying with education and training requirements as applicable in their field.

**DEMOGRAPHICS
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS
(2019/20 Census Information)**

Population:		16,112
	Male:	51.4%
	Female	48.6%
Age:		
	Under 5 years	4.6%
	18 years and over	17.3%
	65 years and over	28.3%
	Median age	44.6
Race		
	Caucasian	87%
	Black/African American	0.8%
	Native American	5.2%
	Asian	1.5%
	Hispanic or Latino	7.4%
Income and Poverty:		
	Per capita (1999)	\$26,523
	Median Household income (1999)	\$ 40,846
	Person below poverty level	\$ 16.5%
	Annual Average Unemployment (2002)	7.4%
Education (Over 25)		
	High School Graduates	92.4%
	Bachelor's Degree	19.5%