

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

Wilton Rancheria Judicial Branch





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

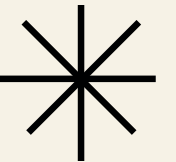
The Judicial Branch of Wilton Rancheria officially adopts the Journey Statement and Vision Statement used in the Administrative Branches' Strategic Plan. The Court Strategic Planning Team has created a Statement of Purpose that is specific to the Court to further define our guiding principles.

JOURNEY STATEMENT

As Miwok and Nisenan people of Wilton Rancheria, original stewards of the Sacramento Valley and Foothills, we shall protect and enhance our Tribal sovereignty, cultural traditions, and homelands. By promoting health, wellness, economic success, and education, the Tribe will continue to build a sovereign nation that honors its history and ancestors, while securing the future for following generations.

VISION

A culturally and economically thriving community of self-governing, resilient people united by shared values and traditions, reflective of our ancestors' dreams.





STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (MISSION)

The Judicial Branch is dedicated to enhancing the sovereignty of the Wilton Rancheria by providing a service-oriented justice system aiming for peaceful resolution of legal disputes. The Judicial Branch shall be governed by the rule of law, operating without bias, independently from other branches of government, subject to appropriate checks and balances, while still maintaining accountability and separation of powers. The Court strives to be inclusive and welcoming, always considering the generational trauma present in the Wilton Rancheria community and promoting justice. The Court will ensure fairness to all participants by ensuring accessible court processes and procedures, maintaining standards of confidentiality, and providing everyone with an opportunity to share their story and be heard.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Goal 1: Tribal Sovereignty

Court exercises its jurisdiction to the fullest extent allowable under the Constitution, Tribal and Federal law, and the Tribe's inherent authority.

Goal 2: Access to Justice

Court is fair and accessible to the community.

Goal 3: Culturally Aligned

Court employs practices that are reflective of Tribal values and community needs.

Goal 4: Independence + Accountability

Court protects and maintains independence and impartiality in its judicial decision making and operates under the highest standards of accountability in adherence to its constitutional and statutory mandates.

Goal 5: Equality, Fairness + Integrity

Court treats all individuals fairly and justly while upholding confidentiality.

Goal 6: Health + Wellness

Court strives to be inclusive and welcoming, always considering the generational trauma present in the community and promoting a holistic approach to justice.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 1: Tribal Sovereignty

Court exercises its jurisdiction to the fullest extent allowable under the Constitution, Tribal and Federal law, and the Tribe's inherent authority.

- Strong intergovernmental relationships and collaboration among the Judicial, Executive, and Legislative Branches that support Tribal sovereignty and priorities.
- Expanded Tribal Court jurisdiction and services that strengthen the Tribe's ability to resolve matters within its own justice system.
- Increased recognition, understanding, and respect for Tribal Court authority among State, Federal, and intertribal partners.
- Enhanced exercise of the Tribe's inherent sovereignty through a strong, independent, and effective Tribal judiciary.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 2: Access to Justice

Court is fair and accessible to the community.

- Increased access to Court services, information, and resources for the Tribal community and other Court users.
- User-friendly and accessible Court processes, forms, and educational materials that support self-representation and informed participation.
- Expanded electronic access to Court services, case information, and public resources while maintaining appropriate confidentiality protections.
- A qualified, engaged, and informed Tribal Bar that supports access to justice and effective legal representation within the Tribal Court system.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 3: Culturally Aligned

Court employs practices that are reflective of Tribal values and community needs.

- Court services, programs, and practices reflect and uphold Wilton Rancheria's cultural values, traditions, and community priorities.
- Increased awareness, understanding, and utilization of traditional peacemaking practices, preventative, and restorative justice practices within the Tribal community.
- Meaningful engagement of Tribal youth and community members in preserving and strengthening cultural approaches to justice and conflict resolution.
- Increased incorporation and visibility of Miwok language, culture, and traditions throughout Court operations and services.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 4: Independence and Accountability

Court protects and maintains independence and impartiality in its judicial decision making and operates under the highest standards of accountability in adherence to its constitutional and statutory mandates.

- Transparency and accountability that strengthens Tribal community trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch.
- Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff consistently uphold the highest ethical, professional, and impartiality standards.
- Greater understanding among Tribal leadership and Tribal community regarding the role, authority, and independence of the Judicial Branch.
- Court operations, policies, and decision-making processes that reflect constitutional, statutory, and judicial best practices.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 5: Equality, Fairness and Integrity

Court treats all individuals fairly and justly while upholding confidentiality.

- Enhanced transparency and demonstrated integrity, which promotes Tribal community and public trust and confidence in the administration of justice.
- Modernized and comprehensive Rules of Court that support equitable, efficient, and consistent judicial processes.
- Effective safeguards that ensure due process, confidentiality, privacy, and responsible stewardship of Court information, while maintaining appropriate access to Court services.
- Clearly established governance, policies, and procedures that promote fairness, integrity, and consistency across all Court operations.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Goal 6: Health and Wellness

Court strives to be inclusive and welcoming, always considering the generational trauma present in the community and promoting a holistic approach to justice.

- Enhanced safety, security, and accessibility throughout the Court environment that supports the well-being of Tribal Members, visitors, Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
- Integration of trauma-informed, culturally-grounded, and healing-centered practices across all Court functions.
- Facilitate access to coordinated wrap-around services that support the healing, stability, and long-term wellness of individuals and families interacting with the Court.
- A Court culture that prioritizes health and wellness, resulting in a more engaged, resilient, and effective judiciary and Court workforce.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 1 – TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Task #	Objective/Action
1.1	Establish formal collaborative relationships with Tribal Executive and Legislative leadership to advance shared Tribal priorities and strengthen Tribal governance.
1.2	Review Tribal laws and codes and provide recommendations for amendments that strengthen Tribal Court authority, jurisdiction, and judicial operations to better serve the Tribal community.
1.3	Develop intergovernmental agreements and partnerships with State, Federal, and Tribal justice agencies that recognize and support Tribal Court authority.
1.4	Evaluate opportunities to expand Tribal Court jurisdiction, services, and case types consistent with Tribal, Federal, and constitutional authority.
1.5	Increase awareness amongst Tribal leadership, community members, and external partners regarding Tribal Court jurisdiction, authority, and the role of the judiciary in advancing Tribal sovereignty.
1.6	Strengthen judicial capacity, infrastructure, and resources necessary for the Court to fully exercise its lawful authority.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 2 – ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Task #	Objective/Action
2.1	Develop and implement self-help services and resources for the Tribal community.
2.2	Identify and reduce barriers to accessing Court services and programs.
2.3	Increase public awareness of Court services, resources, and processes through outreach and education.
2.4	Review, revise, and standardize Court forms for clarity, accessibility, and ease of use.
2.5	Develop user guides, instructional materials, and other self-help resources for common Court proceedings.
2.6	Evaluate and improve Court procedures to promote accessibility for all Tribal community members and other Court users.
2.7	Update and enhance the Court's website to improve Tribal community and public access to laws, information and services.
2.8	Evaluate existing electronic filing, online forms, and other digital services to improve or expand options as necessary and feasible.
2.9	Expand electronic access to case-related information consistent with applicable confidentiality requirements, which will require purchase and deployment of upgraded case management system.
2.10	Review and revise Tribal Bar admission requirements, policies, and examination processes.
2.11	Improve communication and engagement with Tribal Bar members.
2.12	Provide educational opportunities and resources regarding Court practices, procedures, and developments.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 3 – CULTURALLY ALIGNED

Task #	Objective/Action
3.1	Review Court policies, procedures, and programs to ensure alignment with Tribal values and community needs.
3.2	Incorporate culturally relevant practices and perspectives into Court operations and decision-making processes.
3.3	Develop and provide educational opportunities regarding traditional peacemaking practices for Tribal community members, Court personnel, and community partners.
3.4	Expand the availability of peacemaking practices that provide preventative and restorative justice services within the Court system and as an optional resource for the Tribal community.
3.5	Support ongoing training and development opportunities for Traditional Court Peacemakers.
3.6	Develop youth-focused education and engagement opportunities related to peacemaking, Tribal justice, and cultural traditions.
3.7	Create opportunities for intergenerational learning and mentorship involving Elders, Peacemakers, and Tribal youth.
3.8	Identify opportunities to incorporate Miwok language into Court signage, materials, forms, and communications.
3.9	Provide cultural and language learning opportunities for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
3.10	Integrate Miwok cultural teachings, traditions, and values into Court events, ceremonies, and community outreach activities.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 4 – INDEPENDENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Task #	Objective/Action
4.1	Develop and implement performance measures to evaluate Court operations and services.
4.2	Establish regular reporting mechanisms to communicate Court activities, accomplishments, and performance outcomes to Tribal leadership, and the Tribal community.
4.3	Conduct periodic Tribal community outreach events to promote transparency and public understanding of Court operations.
4.4	Implement a Code of Ethics for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
4.5	Provide ongoing ethics, professionalism, and judicial conduct training.
4.6	Establish policies and procedures that support impartial decision-making and ethical accountability.
4.7	Develop civic learning opportunities regarding the role and responsibilities of the Judicial Branch, which include the interpretation and application of the law.
4.8	Promote awareness of the constitutional separation of powers and the importance of judicial independence through appropriate checks and balances.
4.9	Review Court policies and procedures to ensure consistency with constitutional and statutory requirements.
4.10	Identify and implement judicial best practices that enhance fairness, efficiency, and accountability.
4.11	Periodically evaluate Court governance and operational practices to ensure continued alignment with the Court's vision, statement of purpose, and legal mandates.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 5 – EQUALITY, FAIRNESS AND INTEGRITY

Task #	Objective/Action
5.1	Develop and publish Court policies, procedures, forms, and public information on the Court website.
5.2	Publish Appellate Court decisions on the Court website.
5.3	Establish standards for timely and accessible communication with Court users and the Tribal community.
5.4	Provide regular updates to Tribal leadership and the Tribal community regarding Court initiatives, services, and accomplishments.
5.5	Conduct a comprehensive review of existing Rules of Court; revise and update Rules to reflect current laws, best practices, and Tribal values; and submit recommendations to Tribal Council for approval/adoption of revisions.
5.6	Develop and implement confidentiality and records management policies and procedures.
5.7	Provide annual confidentiality, ethics and information security training for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
5.8	Establish secure processes for the storage, access, retention, and release of Court records.
5.9	Review Court policies, procedures, and forms to ensure they promote fairness, consistency, accessibility, and equal treatment for all Court users.
5.10	Develop and maintain a comprehensive Court Policies and Procedures Manual and set up a review schedule to ensure necessary updates are made in a timely manner.
5.11	Standardize administrative and operational practices across all Court functions.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 6 – HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Task #	Objective/Action
6.1	Conduct a comprehensive assessment of Court security, safety, and accessibility needs.
6.2	Identify and obtain additional resources for Court security personnel, including bailiff services and safety equipment.
6.3	Develop and implement Court security and emergency response protocols, including safety and de-escalation training for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
6.4	Develop and deploy trauma-informed practices throughout the Court environment, including Court proceedings and interactions with the Tribal community.
6.5	Provide ongoing training for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff on trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and healing-centered practices.
6.6	Review and revise Court policies, procedures, and forms to align with trauma-informed principles.
6.7	Develop strong partnerships with Tribal agencies and community organizations to facilitate wrap-around services.
6.8	Establish referral pathways and service coordination protocols for individuals and families appearing before the Court.
6.9	Increase awareness of available resources and support services through outreach and educational materials.
6.10	Create wellness protocols for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff.
6.11	Develop and implement a comprehensive employee wellness program for Judicial Officers, Peacemakers, and Court Staff that promotes well-being, resilience, and work-life balance.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The implementation of the Wilton Rancheria Tribal Courts' 2026-2031 Strategic Plan will require thoughtful fiscal planning and responsible stewardship of Tribal resources. While many of the Strategic Plan's initiatives focus on improving services, strengthening Court operations, and expanding access to justice, their successful implementation will depend on the availability of funding, staffing capacity, and organizational support.

The Court will continue to develop annual work plans and budgets that align with the priorities identified in this Strategic Plan. Implementation of strategic initiatives will be evaluated each fiscal year to ensure they remain financially sustainable and consistent with the Tribe's overall priorities.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS



The Court's current operations are primarily supported through the Tribe's annual budget. Future implementation costs may include:

- Professional development and Judicial, Peacemaker, and staff education.
- Technology enhancements and case management improvements.
- Community outreach and educational programming.
- Peacemaking and culturally-informed justice initiatives.
- Consultant or grant-supported projects, when appropriate.

Whenever possible, the Court will pursue grant funding and partnership opportunities to supplement Tribal funding and reduce the financial impact on the Tribe.

Strategic initiatives will be prioritized based on available funding, operational needs, and anticipated benefits to the Tribal community. Projects requiring significant financial investment may be implemented over multiple fiscal years to promote long-term sustainability.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Potential risks that could affect implementation of this Strategic Plan include:

Risk	Potential Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Budget limitations	Delays in implementation of strategic initiatives	Prioritize projects annually and pursue outside funding opportunities.
Staffing capacity	Reduced ability to implement new programs while maintaining daily operations	Phase implementation over multiple years and align projects with available staff resources.
Changes in Tribal priorities	Strategic initiatives may require adjustment	Conduct annual Strategic Plan reviews and modify implementation timelines as needed.
Technology limitations	Delays in improving efficiency and access to services	Evaluate technology needs annually and incorporate improvements into future budget requests.
Grant funding uncertainty	Planned projects may require alternative funding sources	Avoid dependence on grant funding for core operations and develop contingency plans.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

The Court is committed to maintaining sound financial management practices, transparency, and accountability in the implementation of this Strategic Plan. Progress toward strategic goals will be monitored through annual planning, budget review, and performance reporting. This approach allows the Court to remain flexible and responsive to changing fiscal conditions while continuing to advance its mission of providing fair, impartial, culturally-informed, and accessible justice for the Wilton Rancheria community.

Through responsible stewardship of Tribal resources, the Court is committed to implementing this Strategic Plan in a fiscally sustainable manner that strengthens the Tribal justice system and enhances services to the Tribal community.

THANK YOU TO OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM TRIBAL COURT



Hon. Angela Sherigan
Chief Judge



Hon. Vanya Hogen
Associate Judge



Hon. Paul Tsosie
Associate Judge



Ms. Kimberly Flener
Court Administrative Officer



Ms. Bekah Pankiw
Deputy Court Clerk

THANK YOU TO OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM APPELLATE COURT



Hon. Treaver Hodson
Appellate Chief Judge



Hon. Lisa Dickinson
Appellate Judge



Hon. Nicholas Mazanec
Appellate Judge



Hon. Victorio Shaw
Appellate Judge



Hon. Mark Radoff
Appellate Judge

THANK YOU TO OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM TRADITIONAL COURT



Mary Tarango
Spokesperson/Peacemaker



Frank Custino
Peacemaker



Joyce Dozier
Peacemaker



Jeannie McKean
Peacemaker



Mary Rangel
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