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**North Dakota**

**Criminal Justice**

**Information Sharing Plan**

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# Criminal Justice Information Sharing Plan

## Project Background

In the fall of 2000, North Dakota applied for and received a grant from the National Governors' Association (NGA) to develop a criminal justice information sharing plan. North Dakota saw this as an excellent opportunity to bring members of the justice community together to set direction for coordinated efforts.

At about the same time, North Dakota applied for technical assistance from SEARCH. On October 4 and 5, 2000, Larry Webster, a project consultant for SEARCH conducted a site visit. A criminal justice advisory committee was established consisting of a broad cross section of people from the state, county and local organizations. Larry met with members of the advisory committee to assess the issues facing North Dakota. The SEARCH assessment was used in the development of this Criminal Justice Information Sharing Plan.

In December 2000, a team consisting of Deb Ness, Bismarck Chief of Police; Wade Enget, Montrail County State's Attorney; Curt Wolfe, North Dakota Chief Information Officer; Nancy Walz, Associate Director, Information Technology Department; Jerry Kemmet, Director, Bureau of Criminal Investigation; and Keith Nelson, State Court Administrator; traveled to an NGA workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The workshop proved valuable for learning what other states are doing and provided ideas for creating a governance structure. The team continued meeting and with the addition of Elaine Little, Director, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Dave Kleppe, Captain, North Dakota Highway Patrol, provided direction and oversight to the planning process.

The staffs of the Attorney General's Office, the State Court Administrator's Office, and the Highway Patrol including Ted Gladden, Kurt Schmidt, Cher Thomas, Bob Helten, and Tanya Roth, along with Nancy Walz, developed the short-term initiatives and next steps included in the plan.

On February 22, 2001, the advisory committee met again to review the SEARCH technical assistance report and a draft of the plan. The feedback was used to further refine the plan before submission to NGA.

The plan outlines five short-term projects and three initiatives as next steps to full-scale information sharing. The short term projects contained in the plan recognize the fact that there currently exists a commitment to information sharing. The integration work underway is evidence of staff in individual agencies that have taken initiative and shown leadership. Success demonstrated in the implementation of these projects will form a foundation for further planning efforts.

The three long term projects reflect the commitment to criminal justice integration well into the future. To do this, it is necessary to design and develop the technical infrastructure and data standards to facilitate information sharing on a wider scale.

# Assessment

## Environment

North Dakota is a geographically large, rural state. It has a population of approximately 640,000 people and a land mass of 70,704 square miles. The state is divided into 53 counties with most of the population located in and around the larger towns, such as Grand Forks, Bismarck and Fargo. In addition to state and county government, there are four federally recognized Indian tribes in North Dakota.

The state is divided into seven judicial districts with courts in each of the 53 counties. The North Dakota Constitution establishes the North Dakota Supreme Court's administrative responsibility for the judicial system by designating the chief justice as the administrative head of the judicial system. The court system processed 31,429 civil filings, 84,357 administrative traffic filings, 28,909 criminal filings, and 2,313 juvenile filings in 1999.

The attorney general is an elected official in North Dakota. State's attorneys are elected in each county to perform prosecutorial functions. Some operate on a part time basis due to small case loads. The Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) is the law enforcement arm of the Office of Attorney General and also gathers and reports crime statistics. In 1999, 14,590 crime index offenses were reported by local law enforcement agencies. As typical in most areas of the country, police departments and sheriff's offices are controlled and managed locally.

Other executive branch state agencies involved in criminal justice information sharing have directors who are appointed by the governor, including the superintendent of the Highway Patrol, the chief information officer, the director of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the director of the Department of Transportation, the director of the Office of Management and Budget (State Radio), and the director of the Game and Fish Department.

## Strengths and Accomplishments

The state of North Dakota has a number of advantages with regard to criminal justice information sharing because of previously implemented policies and infrastructure.

The Office of the Court Administrator has promoted the use of a common system to manage court information. The Unified Court Information System (UCIS) is used in 29 counties and four municipalities. Basic case related summary data from the counties not using UCIS is entered into UCIS to support the statistical needs of the judicial districts and the statistical needs of the State Court Administrator's Office. Inquire access by the court is used in an additional 10 counties and five municipalities. Over 30 state's attorneys, over 20 police and sheriff's departments, and over 70 employees from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation have access as well. Electronic interfaces from the state UCIS system exist for citation reporting to the Department of Transportation and for sending divorce, annulment, and separation records to the Health Department. Cass county in the East Central Judicial District uses an alternative case management system, PCSS. Summary statistical data from the other two counties in the East Central Judicial District is entered into PCSS. All statistical data from the East Central Judicial District is then added to the summary statistical data from UCIS to generate statewide reports.

The state has a single broadband telecommunications network that provides access for state, county and local government. The network, managed by the Information Technology

Department, has recently been upgraded to provide broadband access to 64 communities and 218 locations throughout the state.

State Radio coordinates public safety communication across the state by administering the state radio network and providing a data network for mobile data terminal users. It also provides links to motor vehicle registration information, driver's status information, driver's history information, criminal history information; and sends messages in reference to missing persons, the apprehension of criminals, return of stolen property, and protection orders on a statewide, national, and international basis through the North Dakota Law Enforcement Teletype System (NDLETS). This system allows public safety agencies to access law enforcement information globally through the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, and INTERPOL, as well as the Canadian CPIC and the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

Technology planning has been incorporated into the business processes of state entities, making joint planning easier in North Dakota. State entities are required to submit technology plans each biennium. These plans are used as input to the Statewide Information Technology Plan. The Statewide Information Technology Plan 2000, published November 2000, includes a specific strategy for integration of systems to collect and report criminal justice information. Technology standards also exist at the state level to ensure compatibility of systems across state government.

## Findings and Recommendations

The Technical Assistance Report completed by SEARCH in February 2001 contained three findings as follows:

1. North Dakota has a highly decentralized criminal justice system with organizational, funding, and technology barriers to adequate coordination of technology and information flow.
2. North Dakota is not yet in a position to pursue a full-scale integration agenda.
3. Despite political, economic, and organizational obstacles, opportunities still exist to improve the electronic exchange of information and the coordination of technology.

The report also made five recommendations:

1. Build support for the integration initiative.
2. Build a solid infrastructure upon which future applications and integration can be built.
3. Begin to develop additional standards to bring consistency to operations and systems.
4. Work on interfaces where involved organizations are willing and able to participate.
5. Work to structure funding mechanisms to reward those who participate in integration-related projects.

This plan addresses each of the findings and recommendations with specific projects. The first project, "Establish a governance structure," is critical to overcoming the barriers of commitment and leadership identified in the second finding. Establishing a governance structure is closely tied to the first recommendation to build support, a necessary first step in any integration effort.

The fourth recommendation, "work on interfaces between willing participants," is accomplished by the other short-term objectives outlined in the plan, specifically:

- ?? Improve disposition reporting.
- ?? Improve access to protection orders.
- ?? Reduce delays in processing traffic citations.
- ?? Consolidate court information.

?? Improve access to court information.

These projects demonstrate the willingness and ability of individual agencies to participate in information sharing initiatives.

Recommendations 2, 3, and 5 are addressed by the last three projects in the plan identified as "Next Steps in Pursuing a Full-Scale Information Sharing Agenda":

- ?? Document requirements and design the information sharing architecture.
- ?? Develop data standards.
- ?? Identify and implement priority projects.

These projects are necessary to establish an environment where broader information sharing can take place. Because funding for multi-agency projects such as these does not exist in individual agency budgets, implementation grant dollars from the NGA planning process and the Department of Justice will be sought.

## Short Term Objectives and Current Projects

### Establish a governance structure

#### Objective

The objective of this project is to establish a governance structure wherein interagency sharing of criminal justice information can occur. For information sharing to take place, organizational boundaries must be bridged by bringing stakeholders together and gaining commitment to common goals.

While information sharing does exist currently, projects are typically limited to simple interfaces between two systems or agencies. Technical solutions developed at lower levels within criminal justice organizations have provided limited improvements. Broader, systemic improvements will require more coordination and leadership. Difficult decisions to implement policy changes will need to be made to support or drive technical solutions.

The establishment of a governance structure will create a mechanism for broad based strategic planning and implementation of criminal justice information sharing initiatives. Shared decision making and extensive communication will be critical success factors as the governance structure is implemented. The committee structure will ensure involvement by stakeholders and create a communication network across the state. At the same time, the structure must include involvement of high level decision makers within the executive and judicial branches when policy issues need to be resolved.

#### Project Description

The project will involve the establishment of a Criminal Justice Information Board, a Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee and a Criminal Justice Advisory Committee. A memorandum of understanding will also be developed to obtain commitment from key stakeholders.

At the request of North Dakota, SEARCH held a site visit in October 2000 in which the consultant interviewed 29 participants from 17 organizations. The result of this visit was a Technical Assistance Report outlining issues and recommendations related to criminal justice

integration in the state. Organizational barriers and the lack of strong commitment and leadership from key players were identified as hurdles. This resulted in a recommendation for creation of a council of policy leaders of all state criminal justice organizations and representative of local government agencies.

In December 2000, six representatives of key stakeholders attended an NGA workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There they learned about the importance of establishing a governance structure and discovered what other states were doing in this regard. This project, "Establishing a governance structure," evolved from the lessons learned in Santa Fe and the recommendations from the SEARCH report.

On January 22, 2001, the governor issued an Executive Order (Attachment 1) with the concurrence of the chief Justice of the North Dakota Supreme Court. The order created the Criminal Justice Information Board consisting of the chief justice of the North Dakota Supreme Court, the North Dakota attorney general and the North Dakota chief information officer. The purpose of the board will be to set policy regarding criminal justice information sharing.

The Executive Order also established a Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee comprised of nine representatives of key state and local stakeholders. The Executive Committee will plan and coordinate specific activities related to criminal justice information sharing. The Executive Committee has had a key role in overseeing the planning process made possible by the NGA grant and will monitor progress toward the objectives in the plan.

The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee was established to provide input to the SEARCH study and this planning process. It is composed of leaders from a broad spectrum of the criminal justice community. It will continue to provide advice and support for information sharing activities. A Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2) has also been developed to obtain commitment from the executives of 11 criminal justice organizations and state agencies.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project will be completed by April 2001.

The project will be completed using reallocated staff time. Minimal related expenses will be absorbed by the agencies involved.

## Improve disposition reporting

### Objective

The primary objective of this project is to improve the timeliness of disposition reporting in the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) System at the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). Secondary benefits will be the elimination of duplicate data entry of dispositions, greater accuracy and more complete reporting. According to the Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems conducted by Search in 1999, the average time between receipt of final felony court disposition and entry into the criminal history database is 90 days. The same report indicates that 78 percent of arrests recorded within the last five years have final dispositions recorded.

BCI, through a manual process, receives information from the state's attorney and enters it into the CCH system. The courts, in a separate process, also enter disposition information into the Unified Court Information System (UCIS). The two systems do not share information. By comparison, several other states report less than two days between final disposition and entry into the CCH system. In these states, the CCH system receives information directly from the court system. Over half the states surveyed indicate it takes less than 10 days between receipt of the disposition until entry into the criminal history database. In terms of completeness of data, 18 states report that more than 80 percent of arrests recorded in the last five years also have disposition information compared to North Dakota's 78 percent.

Law enforcement agencies benefit when disposition information is entered because criminal history checks will give a complete picture of felony arrests. In addition, statistical reporting will provide better information on conviction rates.

## Project Description

In order to improve disposition reporting, a mechanism will be built to extract disposition information from the UCIS system for input into the CCH. This implies that processes for collecting disposition data will also have to be changed. An analysis of the current processes and proposed changes will be completed. The analysis will identify issues surrounding the proposed changes, such as shifting data entry and coding responsibilities to the court clerks, prior to selecting the best alternative. The need for the state's attorneys to enter or modify information for declinations, additional charges or modified charges will be analyzed and included in the design if necessary.

The current manual procedure for collecting disposition information involves the use of Form SFN 14515 (fingerprint card) by multiple organizations. The arresting agency fingerprints the suspect and sends the fingerprint card to BCI. Two copies of the form are sent to the State's Attorney's Office. One copy is completed when the case is filed. The second copy, containing disposition information, is completed and sent to BCI when the case is settled. The process control number (PCN) or arrest tracking number (ATN) is preprinted on each copy and is used to match the arrest to the disposition.

When the case is filed, the courts enter the information into UCIS and a case number is assigned. Dispositions are entered from the criminal judgement form prepared by the state's attorney when the case is settled. Currently UCIS does not receive the PCN to match dispositions to the arrest. In addition, the coding of disposition information is different between UCIS and the CCH system. To collect the necessary information for the CCH system in UCIS, the PCN or another key field will need to be included on documents filed with the court and added to UCIS. Coding of disposition and sentencing information will need to be standardized to meet the need of both the Courts and BCI. Depending on the extent of the changes proposed, court clerks, state's attorneys and local law enforcement will need to be involved because they will be entering and using the information.

Processes will need to be revised to implement the new reporting system. By state law, the state's attorneys are responsible for reporting disposition information. To accommodate the law and provide a quality assurance check, a holding file will be created for the state's attorneys to view online prior to approving for input into the CCH system. The necessity of this step and the need for a legislative change will be reviewed at a later date.

The CCH system will need to be revised to accept the disposition information from an external file.

The scope of this project will cover the 29 counties that use the UCIS system. Other counties will continue to send dispositions to counties on UCIS for input. Cass County will continue to use the manual process. Other counties with state's attorneys who have limited online access may continue to use the manual process as well. Where the automated system is used, state's attorneys will not be required to complete and return the copy of the arrest card to BCI.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project has been started and will require approximately one year to complete.

The project budget includes the following costs and will be completed using existing funding sources. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined when the design is complete.

Contracted assistance:	\$246,960
?? Design the system and develop related policies	
?? Program web interfaces and the CCH system update programs	
?? Revise UCIS database and screens	
Training and support	\$73,312
Total	\$320,272

## Improve access to protection orders

### Objective

The primary objective of this project is to put critical information from protection orders into the hands of law enforcement. Access to protection order information must be timely when law enforcement officers are involved in situations with individuals named in the protection order. Secondary objectives are to increase the number of protection orders reported and to send protection order information from BCI to the FBI as mandated.

All too frequently, law enforcement officials are involved in situations where victims indicate that a protection order exists but the record of it cannot be found immediately. In other cases, the officer is aware of the protection order but does not have critical information like required distance from the victim. All protection orders need to be reported to the central repository in a timely manner and the full text of the protection order needs to be available.

The benefit of this project will be that officers will have enough information to deal with protection order situations with confidence to prevent situations from escalating. For maximum benefit, tribal governments, as well as other state and local government entities, will be asked to participate.

### Project Description

In order to improve the sharing of protection order information, the full text of protection orders will need to be entered into an accessible system and processes for reporting protection orders will need to change. There are two options available: 1) build on the current system or 2) reengineer the process. The project will include an analysis of each option. A preliminary

analysis will determine the impact on stakeholders, particularly court clerks, in terms of staffing. It will also determine the best location (owner) for the protection order information and the feasibility of using the North Dakota Law Enforcement Teletype System (NDLETS) to share the expanded information.

Currently, a court sends a protection order to the sheriff to serve. Once served, the sheriff transmits minimal information through the NDLETS to BCI's Central Warrant Information System (CWIS). This gives other law enforcement entities the ability to query through NDLETS and find the existence of the protection order. If a protection order exists, the agency contacts the originating sheriff's office, and a copy of the protection order is sent by fax. It is likely that all protection orders are not entered into CWIS. Delays exist in the process between the time the Court issues the order and it is made available through NDLETS. Delays also exist in contacting the agency serving the order and obtaining the copy of the order.

By state law, BCI maintains the list of protection orders. The information is currently stored in the system, but BCI plans to implement a new system specifically for protection orders. A required interface to the FBI will be built as part of this project.

One option is to continue the current process but have the sheriffs' offices enter the full text of the order and the fields required for FBI reporting. The list of protection orders would be maintained by BCI. This option does not ensure that all protection orders are reported or eliminate delays, but it does give law enforcement access to more information.

A second option is for the courts to provide the protection order information rather than have it reentered by the sheriffs. Full text of the protection order and any additional fields would need to be added to the court database (UCIS). Ideally, advocacy groups would be able to enter the text of the petition for the protection order through an online interface if they wished. The courts would be responsible for entering the information if it was not previously entered online. Once entered, the protection order information would be shared with BCI for access by local law enforcement agencies through NDLETS. A process would need to be developed to collect information from the sheriff's office to indicate the order had been served. As in the first option, data would be forwarded to the FBI from BCI.

If appropriate, a mechanism could be created for the reporting of tribal protection orders and counties that do not use UCIS. This decision will be made after the requirements analysis is completed. In both cases, training of local law enforcement and court staff will be required to familiarize them with the new process.

## Budget and Timeframe

Based on implementing the second option, this project will require approximately one year to complete. The changes required for the UCIS system should be completed by September 1, 2001.

The project budget includes the following costs. Grant funds from the Violence Against Women Office of the U.S. Department of Justice will be pursued to supplement existing funding sources. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined when the design is complete.

Analysis of processes and system design	\$40,000
UCIS programming (Additional fields, online petition entry)	\$40,000

BCI programming (Download from UCIS, interface to FBI, modifications to protection order system)	\$40,000
NDLETS interface	\$50,000
Training of advocacy groups, local law enforcement and court staff	\$70,000
Design and implement solution for non-UCIS counties and tribal courts	not available
Total	\$240,000

## Reduce delays in processing traffic citations

### Objective

The primary objective of this project is to reduce delays in processing traffic citations. The current manual process creates situations where courts receive the payment for the citation prior to receipt of the citation. The courts are unable to answer questions from citizens about a particular citation until the citation is received at their location, often several days after the citation was written.

Because citations are processed in the county where issued, state patrol and other law enforcement officers must be cognizant of county boundaries and file paperwork to the correct location. Citizens can be confused about whom to contact with questions about citations. Because over 95 percent of offenders pay the citation without contesting it, they expect the transaction to be fast and easy.

As a result of this project, better customer service will be provided to citizens by more efficient processing of traffic citations. As an additional benefit, criminal justice agencies will spend less time on bureaucratic paper work and more time maintaining legal protections and safety.

### Project Description

The project to reduce delays in reporting traffic citation information will be accomplished in a phased approach. The first phase is the implementation of a citation system for the North Dakota Highway Patrol. The second and third phases include activities to study the feasibility of additional process improvements and recommend changes.

The first phase involves collecting citation information at the point of origin, the officer's car, or as soon thereafter as possible. Once collected electronically, the information can be shared with other agencies without reentering it. The Highway Patrol office will develop and implement a system for entering citations into mobile data terminals in their cars. For officers without mobile data terminals in their cars, information will be entered in the Highway Patrol office. Once entered, the citation information is shared with the Department of Transportation (DOT) for processing against driver's license data. It is also tied to the Highway Patrol activity and case management databases.

The second phase of this project is to explore the possibility of implementing the citation system on a statewide basis for local law enforcement agencies. The Highway Patrol accounts

for five to 10 percent of all citations written in the state. The system is designed around the citation information required of all jurisdictions by North Dakota Century Code 29-05-31. A study will be completed to determine the extent of interest among local law enforcement agencies, identify alternatives along with associated costs, and determine feasibility.

The third phase is to evaluate the processing of citations from the standpoint of the courts and DOT to streamline the process. Currently the courts manually enter the citation disposition information from each of the 29 counties on UCIS into the system and process payment receipts. For the other counties, the information is not entered. Hearings are scheduled if requested. This happens for less than five percent of citations. Dispositions of the citations are sent electronically to DOT to match against the driving record of the offender. Options will be explored to electronically transmit the citations from local law enforcement so the courts do not have to reenter the citations. A pilot project using Highway Patrol information will be considered to demonstrate feasibility.

In addition, a central processing location for citations will be explored. This would allow better customer service by eliminating the need to determine the county where the citation was processed and possibly allowing online payment of the citation. Since over 95 percent of the citations are paid without further involvement, information could be passed on to DOT in a more timely manner. For citations requiring a hearing, information would be transmitted to the courts for further processing. A feasibility analysis will be completed to identify legislative changes necessary, as well as staffing and funding issues. Senate Concurrent Resolution 4042 has been introduced in the current legislative session to direct Legislative Council to study this issue during the next interim session.

The second and third phases can be done concurrently if desired.

## Budget and Timeframe

Phase 1 of this project began in June 2000 and will be completed by June 2001. Phase 2 and 3 will each take approximately six months to complete and will begin when funding sources are identified.

The project budget includes the following costs. Phase 1 will be completed using existing funding sources. Funding sources for phases 2 and 3 have not been identified. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined when the scope is determined.

Phase 1 - Develop Highway Patrol citation reporting system	\$75,000
Phase 2 - Study the feasibility of a state-wide citation reporting system	\$100,000
Phase 3 - Identify options to streamline the processing of citations by the courts and DOT	\$150,000
Total	\$325,000

## Consolidate court information

### Objective

The objective of this project is to provide a system whereby all district judges, court personnel and other authorized users will have the ability to share case related data in real time throughout the state regardless of the district in which they reside. The Court Technology Committee adopted the following goals in March 2000:

1. To assure all district judges and authorized court personnel have the ability to share case related data in real time throughout the state.
2. To develop a process for real time data transfer between Professional Computer Software Services (PCSS) and UCIS to support the business process of the affected departments.
3. To provide a single point of inquiry for all case information, statistical reporting, and inquiries by other criminal justice entities.
4. To have a single voice, strategy, and point of contact for judicial information system objectives and issues for the purposes of communication with other entities.
5. To obtain efficiencies through the elimination of redundancy and work duplication; standardization of hardware, software, and procedures; and training by integrating information systems.

Court information is critical in terms of statistical reporting of number of cases, type of cases, and disposition, as well as in providing specific information included in protection orders. Having a single point of access to this information creates a number of efficiencies. User training is reduced because only one interface needs to be learned. If all the information resides in a single location, data will be more complete and programming and support costs will be reduced for interfaces to other systems.

Currently 29 counties in five districts as well as four municipalities use the Unified Case Information System (UCIS) which resides on a judicial-owned AS/400 in Bismarck. Grand Forks County operates UCIS on a stand-alone AS/400 and Cass County operates a vendor package from Professional Computer Software Services (PCSS) on a county owned AS/400. These are two of North Dakota's most populous counties and represent approximately 25 percent of the court cases.

At the other end of the spectrum, 23 of North Dakota's counties operate manually because they handle very small case volumes (less than 1,000 per year including administrative traffic). Minimal data from court cases in these counties is sent to counties on UCIS where it is entered into the system. This results in delays and fewer data elements are captured.

Electronic interfaces from the state UCIS system exist, or are planned for disposition reporting to BCI, citation reporting to DOT, protection order reporting to law enforcement, protection order access by advocacy groups, and Health Department divorce reporting. Because all counties do not use UCIS, 25 percent of the data these other criminal justice agencies desire is not available. Manual data entry or expensive duplicate interfaces will be required if all the court systems are not consolidated.

Court information is a critical component of criminal justice information sharing in North Dakota. By consolidating court information into a single database, the number and complexity of interfaces with other systems will be reduced. A comprehensive picture of the criminal justice system will be easier to obtain, resulting in better decision making.

## Project Description

This project involves implementing a centralized case management system that meets the needs of both large and small counties in North Dakota. The project, under the leadership and direction of the Court Technology Committee, contains three components. The unique issues of Grand Forks County, Cass County and the 23 low-volume counties are addressed as separate sub-projects.

Grand Forks County currently uses the UCIS system on a stand-alone basis. Significant customization to interface UCIS to the State's Attorneys Management System (SAMS) has been done for Grand Forks County. Data from the Grand Forks County UCIS system will be migrated to the central UCIS system. Personnel in Grand Forks and the North East Central Judicial District will access UCIS from the state judicial branch's UCIS system.

To maintain the interface between UCIS and SAMS, software will be implemented to "mirror" Grand Forks County UCIS data from the state judicial branch's AS/400 onto the Grand Forks County AS/400. Likewise, SAMS data will be replicated from the Grand Forks County's AS/400 to the state judicial branch's AS/400. The project involves selecting and purchasing the software, installing the software on the two AS/400s, and setting up the data transmission procedures. Testing will be completed to ensure that all requirements are met. This project is currently being conducted by the State Court Administrator's Office.

A different situation exists in Cass County where PCSS has been implemented. PCSS users are comfortable using the system and like the functionality that exists. A study was completed by Enterprise Solutions, Inc. in September 2000 to determine the best approach to UCIS - PCSS integration. The study recommended several specific enhancements to UCIS, converting the clerk's office in Cass County to UCIS and establishing data sharing routines between PCSS and UCIS. The recommendations from the study are being considered. Once agreement on a course of action is reached, implementation will take approximately one year.

In the case of the 23 low volume counties that are not on UCIS, the issue becomes one of finding an affordable means of providing access. Because the total number of civil, administrative traffic, criminal, and juvenile cases processed in each these counties is less than 1,000 per year, justifying the cost of providing network access and support is difficult. Infrequent usage and the distance from support services drive up costs. The State Court Administrator's Office does not currently have the staff to support additional users. Activities in this portion of the project will involve finding ways to reduce communication costs by working with the North Dakota Information Technology Department as the network provider. The courts will continue to explore ways to reduce support costs and expand access to additional counties.

In the 2003-2005 biennium, the validity of the UCIS system will be reevaluated to determine if better alternatives exist.

## Budget and Timeframe

Moving Grand Forks County onto the state UCIS system is scheduled to be complete by July 2001. Implementation of a solution for Cass County will take approximately one year once a

decision is reached to move forward. Low-volume counties will be added to UCIS as investments can be justified.

The project budget includes the following costs. The Grand Forks County implementation is being funded through the State Court Administrator's Office. Funding sources for the Cass County implementation and low-volume counties have not been identified. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined as the project progresses.

Grand Forks County implementation ?? Data replication software ?? On-site training ?? Reallocated staff time	\$69,000
Cass County implementation	\$261,000 to \$425,000
Connect the 23 low-volume counties ?? Hardware and software (per user) ?? Telecommunication costs (per month, per county) ?? Support from the State Court Administrator's Office	\$2,000 \$400 TBD

## Improve access to court information

### Objective

The primary objective of this project is to provide easy access to court calendars, statistical data, and other public information to court personnel, the public, and others via a web browser.

Most court information is, by law, public information. To date, access to this information has been controlled either by requiring an in-person visit or a call to the courthouse or by restricting electronic access to authorized users. This limitation minimizes usage of the information both by the public and the criminal justice community. Better access to court information will benefit state's attorneys, law enforcement, corrections and safety agencies.

Having web-based access to court calendars will reduce the need for calls and visits to the court house to check calendars. A graphical, web based interface to court data will be available to infrequent users who are less comfortable with the text-based green screen interface to UCIS.

Summary statistical case data about findings, dispositions, and number of cases pending will be available via pre-defined queries. By replicating the data from UCIS on a data warehouse, system performance of UCIS for court personnel will not suffer and the data warehouse will be able to be "tuned" for efficient processing of queries against larger data volumes.

### Project Description

This project involves making court information available via a web browser in an easy-to-use format using data warehouse technologies.

The first phase of this project is to analyze requirements and recommend software for business intelligence tools, a relational database management system, and an application server operating system. A consultant will analyze and document data requirements for data

warehouse and application construction. Available software and tools will be reviewed against the requirements to develop a recommendation for purchase.

The second phase of the project is to implement the chosen solution. At this point, a system is envisioned whereby detail data from UCIS would be replicated in real time to a data warehouse on a separate server. Extraction, data transformation, and load processes will be developed. A web browser interface, calendar access, and three reports will be designed as part of the initial application.

The system will be piloted with existing UCIS users. Once successful, access will be expanded to others. Requests for additional queries or data elements will be considered in later enhancements.

The data warehouse will contain information from all courts using UCIS. Until the court consolidation project is complete, this will include all districts except the East Central Judicial District. This project will also provide North Dakota with experience using data warehouse and publishing tools, which will be valuable in the later project to design the long term information sharing architecture.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project is scheduled for completion by September 2001.

The project budget includes the following costs and will be completed using existing resources from the State Court Administrator's Office. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined as the project progresses

Consultant	\$52,800
Server hardware and software	\$11,000
Data warehouse, reporting and development tools	\$16,000
Total	\$79,800

## Next Steps in Pursuing a Full-Scale Information Sharing Agenda

**Document requirements and design the information sharing architecture**

### Objective

The objective of this project is to define the information sharing needs of North Dakota criminal justice agencies and to develop a conceptual design for technologies to support information exchange.

In order to develop a comprehensive plan for sharing information, it is first necessary to document the system-wide view of the data and how it flows through the system. By documenting who creates the data, who uses the data, and the reason for its existence, all

stakeholders will have a more informed view of their role in maintaining the accuracy and timeliness of the data. A data flow diagram and process flow diagram will be two of the deliverables of this project that will help communicate criminal justice information requirements.

For information sharing projects to succeed, a uniform approach needs to be adopted. The technical architecture will describe the hardware, software, and network components necessary at the state and local levels for efficient sharing of information. Standards will be proposed where necessary to ensure compatibility. Once a technical architecture is established, individual projects can proceed rapidly by building on and extending the base infrastructure. Components that will be used by many agencies can be built once, eliminating duplication. Data can be collected at the source and shared without reentering the information.

Because of the number of agencies and organizations involved, the architecture will need to accommodate the sharing of information among distributed and sometimes disparate systems. Flexibility and a phased approach to adoption will be the keys to successful implementation of the architecture.

## Project Description

This project, the study of North Dakota's criminal justice information requirements and systems, will result in two documents: 1) a requirements analysis and 2) the technical architecture design. The information sharing requirements document and architecture design will be completed by reviewing existing documentation and holding joint development sessions with stakeholders. In addition, research into models used in other states will be completed as part of the analysis.

Previous information gathered in 1994 by the Criminal Justice Data Forum will be used as a starting point for the requirements analysis. The SEARCH report entitled *Planning the Integration of Justice Information Systems: Developing Justice Information Exchange Points* will be used as a guide. Stakeholders from criminal justice agencies and organizations will be brought in as process area experts. They will provide information about the data they generate, maintain and access. A consultant will be hired to facilitate the workgroup sessions and document the combined knowledge of the participants. Results of this phase will be a data flow diagram and process flow diagrams identifying data exchange points and events that trigger information sharing. Recommendations will be developed to reduce duplication and improve the timeliness and accuracy of the data.

The consultant will also research the progress of other states in implementing a data sharing architecture using the information provided through SEARCH and the National Association of State Information Resource Executives (NASIRE). Working with agency technical staffs, the consultant will develop a technical architecture to meet the needs of North Dakota. The current distributed environment and available resources will be considered in developing the recommendation. Experience gained by implementing the short term objectives mentioned earlier in this plan will provide a basis for informed decision making. An implementation plan will be established for deploying the architecture. Policy issues identified during the analysis will be resolved with the Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee and Criminal Justice Information Board.

The Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee will oversee the project. Success of the project will be evaluated by determining the degree of acceptance and adoption of the recommended architecture.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project will take approximately six months to complete once funding sources are identified.

The project budget includes the following costs. Funding sources have not yet been identified. Funds provided through the NGA planning process will be pursued. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined prior to project initiation.

Contracted assistance: ?? Requirements analysis including the data flow diagram and process flow diagrams ?? Design information sharing architecture	\$150,000
Reallocated staff time from participating agencies	\$30,000
Total	\$180,000

## Develop data standards

### Objective

The objective of this project is to develop data standards for information that is shared among criminal justice agencies. Data definitions will be developed outlining the meaning and specific characteristics, like format and length, of commonly used fields.

North Dakota has found that sharing information can be difficult, if not impossible, if key fields cannot be used to match records across systems. Arrests cannot be easily matched to dispositions because the arresting agency uses a different number than the courts to track the charge. Sentencing information originating with the state's attorneys and the courts is used by corrections agencies and BCI. By identifying data standards, systems can be built or purchased that conform to the standards, facilitating the sharing on information. As long as systems meet the standards, agencies can pursue development and implementation efforts knowing that their system will be compatible with others.

Common codes for shared information will be developed so that information entered in one system can be understood when passed to users of another system. A common coding structure for fields such as offense and disposition are necessary to ensure accuracy and avoid misinterpretation.

### Project Description

The development of data standards for North Dakota will build on efforts of other states like Kansas, where a significant amount of work has been done. North Dakota will hire a consultant to research the standards being developed at the federal level and in other states. Data flow diagrams developed in the previous project will help to identify data elements that are used most frequently and are most critical to information sharing in North Dakota. The consultant will facilitate working sessions among criminal justice stakeholders to gain consensus on the data standards and ensure adoption.

Extensible Markup Language (XML) will be explored as a method for information exchange. The North Dakota Court Administrator has been involved in national efforts at defining XML standards. This experience will be leveraged so that this project builds on previous efforts rather than "reinventing the wheel."

Experience with the previous project to improve disposition reporting will provide a basis for further activity. Requirement for key fields defined in that project will provide a starting point for additional standards. The governance structure established as the first project in this plan will play a key role in obtaining input and getting approval for the data standards.

The Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee will oversee the project. Success of the project will be evaluated by determining the degree of acceptance and adoption of the data standards.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project will take approximately nine months to complete and will begin once a funding source has been identified.

The project budget includes the following costs. Funding sources have not yet been identified. Funds provided through the NGA planning process will be pursued. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined prior to project initiation.

Contracted assistance:	\$100,000
Reallocated staff time from participating agencies	\$20,000
Total	\$120,000

## Identify and implement priority projects

### Objective

The objective of this project is to identify and implement high priority criminal justice information sharing projects. Because of limited resources, it is imperative that project funding be planned and targeted to efforts that provide the most value. Identifying priority projects will provide information necessary to find resources and obtain funding.

The real benefit of planning as an ongoing process will be realized as projects included in this plan are evaluated and lessons learned are incorporated into new projects. Projects will be planned to implement the information sharing architecture design and data standards established previously.

Rather than planning separately, criminal justice agencies will share their individual plans and incorporate them into a comprehensive blueprint for criminal justice information sharing. By sharing planning information, agencies will recognize opportunities for joint efforts to increase benefits and reduce costs.

## Project Description

This project reflects a continuation of the current planning effort. Because the current plan was established in a short period of time, the rigorous analysis needed for comprehensive planning was not completed. In a year's time, the governance structure will have reached a higher level of maturity, and much of the required analysis will be complete.

A number of information sharing projects have been mentioned and some are being undertaken at the agency level if funding is available. The current list of potential projects includes:

- ?? Rewriting the Uniform Crime Reporting System
- ?? Extending mobile data terminal access to other areas of the state
- ?? Converting the state radio system from analog to digital
- ?? Increasing the number of AFIS systems available in the state
- ?? Replacing the current SAMS system
- ?? Upgrade the LETS system

Development of a comprehensive plan is not intended to put a moratorium on current projects but rather to increase the probability that, over time, systems will be developed to share data more easily.

The requirements analysis used to develop the technical architecture will also be used to identify priority projects. Criteria will be established to rank the benefits. For example, information sharing projects that benefit a large number of users or result in cost savings might be ranked higher.

Once the criteria are established, a list of potential projects will be developed and ranked. The process will involve broad participation from the criminal justice community to ensure commitment. To the extent possible, funding will be routed to the priority projects.

The Criminal Justice Information Executive Committee will oversee the project. Success of the planning effort will be evaluated by tracking the success of individual projects within the plan.

## Budget and Timeframe

This project will take approximately three months to complete and will begin after the projects to document requirements and develop data standards are complete.

The project budget includes the following costs. Funding sources have not been identified. Funds provided through the NGA planning process will be pursued. Costs are scope estimates only and will be refined prior to project initiation.

Contracted assistance:	\$60,000
Reallocated staff time from participating agencies	\$40,000
Total	\$100,000