SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY AND THE MICHIGAN COURTS

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY BY THE SPECIAL INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

> CHRYSLER CORPORATION FORD MOTOR COMPANY GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

SEPTEMBER 29, 1971

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September 21, 1971

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Honorable Thomas M. Kavanagh, Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court Honorable G. Mennen Williams, Associate Justice and Chairman of the

Supreme Court Electronic Computer Committee Honorable Eugene F. Black, Associate Justice Honorable Paul L. Adams, Associate Justice Honorable Thomas E. Brennan, Associate Justice Honorable Thomas G. Kavanagh, Associate Justice Honorable John B. Swainson, Associate Justice

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The attached report on "Systems Technology and the Michigan Courts" summarizes the preliminary findings and recommendations of a Special Industry Advisory Group consisting of systems specialists and legal personnel from the Chrysler Corporation, the Ford Motor Company, and the General Motors Corporation.

The study was undertaken at the request of the Supreme Court Electronic Computer Committee, through Justice G. Mennen Williams, to Mr. Lynn A. Townsend, Mr. Lee A. Iacocca, and Mr. Edward N. Cole. It was hoped that a survey by this Group would provide a means by which Michigan Industry could share its extensive systems experience with the Courts.

As the report indicates, we have visited a large number of courts both in Michigan and elsewhere throughout the United States with a view to identifying the major opportunities for administrative improvement through modern systems technology. The report summarizes the opportunities that were identified, and it suggests how the Advisory Group believes the Courts should proceed if these opportunities are to be realized.

A major element in any successful systems program is the interest and involvement of the key personnel to be served. We have been gratified to observe the widespread enthusiasm and interest in this subject among justices, judges, clerks, and administrative personnel in every Michigan court visited, and also in the other agencies of state and local government. The Court Procedures Technology Committee, recently created by the Supreme Court, has undoubtedly been an important factor in stimulating this interest.

Although there have been significant programs of systems improvements elsewhere in a number of metropolitan court systems, we found no comprehensive and coordinated program related to the needs of a state court system as a whole. In most states the development effort has been fragmented at the local court level --- an approach that can lead to duplication of effort, unnecessarily high costs, and confusion for the attorneys who practice in several courts.

September 21, 1971

Michigan, through the coordinated approach that has been launched by the Supreme Court, has an opportunity to achieve outstanding administrative improvement in a relatively short time. We are honored to have the opportunity to participate in this improvement program.

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Respectfully yours,

From Chrysler Corporation:

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From General Motors Corporation:

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From Ford Motor Company:

word t. Whilean Chithan Those

Edward L. Williams

Arthur C. Nesse

Catrick C. B. Kinkpatrick

Dennis R. Pollard

Wright C. Cotton

Gonald D. Hestenes

Arnold D. Hestenes

Colicard Edward S. Kozon

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Otis M. Smith

SUMMARY

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of a team of systems and legal personnel from Chrysler Corporation, the Ford Motor Company, and the General Motors Corporation, after a preliminary survey of possibilities for improving the administration of the Michigan Court System through the application of modern systems technology.

The team, the Special Industry Advisory Group, was organized in July, 1971, in response to the request of Justice G. Mennen Williams, as Chairman of the Supreme Court Electronic Computer Committee. Concurrently, the Supreme Court organized a Court Procedures Technology Committee, to serve as a policy group for advising the Court on the development and application of new systems and technologies throughout the Michigan Court System. The membership of this Committee is listed in Appendix A.

The Special Industry Advisory Group immediately undertook a preliminary review to determine the extent to which computers and other technological improvements have been successfully applied in the court systems of other states as well as in Michigan; to identify the priority problems within Michigan courts for which such applications might be useful; and to suggest how Michigan Courts could best approach the task of launching the needed improvements.

This report indicates the findings and recommendations of the Special Industry Advisory Group. Highlights of the report are summarized below:

I. Experiences of Court Systems in Other States

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The Special Industry Advisory Group felt that visitations to courts that have installed, or plan to install, computers or other systems improvements would be helpful. Those courts visited in other states were in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C.

Computers were found to be useful tools in the performance of many court administrative functions, including traffic violation processing, case status reporting, case indexing, attorney scheduling, jury selection, recording of docket entries, preparation of notices, and the issuance of statistical and summary reports. Non-computer systems were also observed, including the use of microfilm.

The experiences of the courts visited indicate that, except for traffic courts, computerization of court functions usually involves costs in excess of the immediate savings. Courts with computerized systems maintain, however, that these provide better control over their day-to-day operations, more efficient scheduling, and improved access to case information. In the case of traffic courts, the cost savings and increased collections were reported in several cases to have been greater than the costs of the computer systems.

The involvement of experienced court personnel in the development of data processing systems has been a factor in the success of all the court systems we observed. The degree of success also appears to be closely related to the capabilities of the Systems Manager and his staff.

II. Opportunities for Systems Improvements Within the Michigan Court Systems

The Group visited 13 Michigan courts, including the Circuit Courts in Genesee, Kalamazoo, and Wayne Counties; the Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit and its Traffic Division; the Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit; the Wayne County Probate Court: the District Courts located in Kalamazoo (2), Portage, and Southfield; and the Highland Park Municipal Court. These visits were intended to provide an overview of the Michigan Court System, and to identify probable opportunities for systems improvements.

Opportunities identified include the following:

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- 1. At the Supreme Court and at most of the other courts visited, court personnel indicated that the information currently available on case loads and case status is less extensive than would be desirable. It is possible that an improved statistical control system could be installed quickly and at a low cost simply by transplanting a similar system such as one developed by the State of Colorado. Such a system could provide needed control information both to the Supreme Court and to the individual courts throughout the state. (Page 16.)
- 2. In the Traffic and Ordinance Division of Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit, it appears desirable to proceed as rapidly as possible with the development of a proposed computer system for processing and controlling the large volume of cases handled. It is probable that substantial savings could be made available through such a computer system. (Page 17.)
- 3. At the Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit, there appears to be significant potential for systems improvement through computer and microfilm applications related to case indexing, docketing, calendaring, selective information exchange with appropriate agencies, statistical reporting, and jury selection. (Page 18.)
- 4. In the Wayne County Circuit Court, as well as in other large Circuit Courts, there is a need for essentially the same systems improvements with respect to criminal cases as those suggested for the Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit. In addition, the Circuit Courts have need for comparable controls on civil cases. It seems desirable, therefore, to develop a "Basic Michigan Court System" that could handle both criminal and civil cases with as much commonality as This need not imply concurrent launching of all possible. applications, and the system should be flexible enough to provide assistance to courts with or without access to large computer facilities. What is needed is an orderly plan that takes into account the needs of the major criminal and civil court environments to be served as the system evolves. (Page 20.)

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5. At the Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit, it appears likely that some of the applications suggested for such a "Basic Michigan Courts System" could be fruitfully applied, and consideration should also be given to the needs of this court in the development of such a system. (Page 20.)

6. At the Wayne County Probate Court and the other Probate Courts in Michigan, the court functions appear to be readily adaptable to computer-based systems. Applications related to various follow-up procedures required in the administration of estates should be particularly helpful. It does not appear feasible to combine systems development for these courts with that of the other civil courts. (Page 21.) The Advisory Group did not review the operations of the Juvenile Division of the Wayne County Probate Court although Judge Lincoln has expressed strong interest in the possibilities of a systems program. Aside from some limited indexing of cases on computers in Cook County, Illinois, we found little evidence of systems activity in juvenile courts elsewhere. It is our impression that the juvenile problem will require some specialized development effort, although this effort can undoubtedly be aided by the experience gained in other Michigan courts.

7. In some District Courts, computer services are already being purchased from commercial service bureaus. Consideration should be given to developing a standardized system and to assuring that the necessary maintenance of such a system is available. (Page 21.)

Time did not permit the Special Industry Advisory Group to study the outstate courts in detail. The Supreme Court, however, recently sent a "Technology Questionnaire" to all trial courts in Michigan. The results of this questionnaire will provide additional needed information on the problems of individual courts and the actions already being taken.

III. Recommended Organizational Approach

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A necessary first step toward the development of a coordinated systems program would be the appointment of a "Director of Systems", who would report to the Supreme Court Administrator. He would be responsible for development of improved information systems for the Supreme Court itself; for overseeing the development and installation of major systems projects within the Michigan courts and for fostering the common development of such systems where desirable; for prescribing common coding practices; and for systematically reviewing the administrative practices used throughout the Michigan court system. (Page 22.)

A desirable counterpart to this position would be a "Systems Manager" or a "Systems Coordinator" within each large-volume court that undertakes a significant systems program. Comparable functions could be exercised in other courts by the Court Clerk or by the Court Administrator when one is employed. (Page 23.)

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Three computerization projects with concurrent priority are suggested: (1) a Case Information Control System, to provide improved information on case loads, case status, and other problem areas (Page 16); (2) a system for the Traffic and Ordinance Division of the Recorder's Court (Page 25); and (3) a "Basic Michigan Court System" that could serve the criminal and civil functions of the larger circuit courts, and some of the civil functions of the Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit (Page 28). Similar projects for the Probate Courts could be undertaken at a later date after some experience has been gained on the initial projects.

For these projects, it is suggested that the development effort be undertaken by mixed teams of personnel, including representatives of the courts affected, the Supreme Court, and the outside analysts and programmers from software firms. Steering committees of judges, court administrative personnel, senior officials from law enforcement and other affected agencies, and representatives of the Bar should supervise the development effort. Such participation is a vital ingredient of systems planning. Unless early agreement is reached on what the problems are to which a system is to be addressed, and what the system is expected to accomplish, the outcome is likely to be a disappointment.

Such steering committees can play useful roles throughout the four major phases of systems development:

Phase I: Problem Definition and Conceptual Design

Phase II: Detailed Systems Specification and Development of Training Plans

Phase III: Programming and Launching

Phase IV: Operation

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It is recommended that the development effort be undertaken, where possible, on a modular basis, so that the affected courts will be able to adjust to computerized procedures over an extended period, and so that the costs and high risks of unnecessary complexity can be avoided.

Finally, computerization should not be regarded as an end in itself, but rather as one of several possible solutions to specific problems. No program should be undertaken without first identifying each of these problems and determining whether computerization or some other form of systems improvement affords the best solution.

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EXPERIENCES OF COURTS SYSTEMS IN OTHER STATES

In order to develop meaningful recommendations to the Supreme Court of Michigan, the Special Industry Advisory Group felt that visitations to courts in other states would be helpful. Courts that had installed, or were planning to install, improved systems (computerized and/or non-computerized) were selected. Those visited were located in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C. Brief summaries of these visits are included below.

Some generalizations from these visits are as follows:

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- Experience has shown that electronic computers can be a useful tool in the administration of the court functions. Examples of functions computerized are: traffic violations, case load and status, indexing, attorney scheduling, jury selections, recording of docket entries, preparation of notices, and the issuance of statistical and summary reports based on data contained in the file.
- 2. There are areas where non-computer systems can do much to improve the operation of the court. Examples are: streamlining administrative organization, simplified forms, changes in manual methods, and the intelligent use of the technological advances made in microfilm and microfiche techniques.
- 3. Several courts (e.g., Los Angeles, San Diego, and New York) have separated parking violations from other traffic violations. In these cases, parking violations are handled as a collection problem rather than as criminal offenses. This dual classification does not necessarily imply separate files, but it does permit some simplification of procedures for handling the parking violations. Procedurally, this is not inconsistent with the practice of the Detroit Traffic and Ordinance Division, but it is a distinction to be considered in the development of any new system.
- 4. The experience of the courts visited indicates that, except for Traffic Court, computerization of court functions usually involves costs in excess of the immediate savings. Courts with computerized systems maintain that they have a better system both for the day-to-day operation and for the follow-up needed to assure complete control of all cases. In the case of the Traffic Court, the savings and increased collections have in several cases more than offset the costs of the systems.
- 5. The involvement of experienced court personnel in the development of data processing systems has been one of the most important factors in the success of all the court systems we observed. The experience of the courts with respect to such involvement coincides with that of industry, and we strongly encourage this practice wherever feasible.

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PART I

6. The degree of success appears to be in direct proportion to the insight, vision, and capability of the Systems Manager and his staff. We also observed that the use of outside (of the court system) programming and computer services was a common practice for supplementing internal systems resources.

The study group has gathered a wealth of material that will be available to any on-going effort the Michigan Supreme Court may initiate. A bibliography of this material is included as Appendix C to this report.

Summary reports of the outstate visits are included in the following order:

- 1. Cook County Court System; Chicago, Illinois
- 2. Colorado Supreme Court; Denver, Colorado
- 3. Los Angeles County Superior Court; Los Angeles, California
- 4. Discussions with Mr. Eldridge Adams, Director of Research and Development, Los Angeles County Supreme Court, and widely known consultant

5. Los Angeles Municipal Court; Los Angeles, California

- 6. Regional Justice Information Systems (RJIS); Los Angeles, California
- 7. The Criminal Court of the City of New York; New York, N. Y.

8. Maricopa County Court; Phoenix, Arizona

9. Common Pleas Court; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 10. San Diego Superior Court; San Diego, California
- 11. San Diego Municipal Court; San Diego, California
- 12. Superior Court of the City and County of San Francisco, California
- 13. Discussions with Mr. Ralph Klepps, Administrative Director of California Judicial Council
- 14. District of Columbia Superior Court; Washington, D. C.

Summary Reports

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1. Cook County Court System; Chicago, Illinois

As a result of 1964 referendum, all courts in Cook County are under a single organization. The presiding judge has administrative authority over all courts in the county. The courts are financed at the county level with budget approval coming from the County Board of Supervisors.

The court has a separate systems and data processing organization with its own hardware. The organization has approximately 100 people - of which there are

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12 systems and programming people. The hardware is an IBM 360-40-256K with a 2314 disc file and 7-2260 video terminals.

The Supreme Court of Illinois has no identified central systems planning activity for the development of any state-wide court system plan. Cook County considers itself an autonomous organization. However, the state has a legal council setup consisting of legislative leaders, judges, and members of the State Bar Association under the general direction of the Supreme Court to help solve problems existing in the judicial process.

The initial use of computers was the mechanization of the Traffic Court (moving violations). The system is a batch operation. Dispositions are recorded and convictions are sent to the Secretary of State for recording into the state licensing system. There is no transmittal of information back to the sheriff or local police departments.

Parking tickets are also processed in batch mode with an excellent follow-up system (90 days). This has been effective in collecting past due obligations. Once each year warrants are issued for the arrest of multiple-parking offenders. A mandatory \$125 bond must be posted until these violations are disposed of.

A large percentage of moving violations are disposed of each month because a state law requires the violators to: (1) post \$25 cash bond; (2) surrender a bond card, or (3) surrender driver's license to arresting officer.

In other courts, a mechanized video terminal-oriented indexing system is in operation. Updating is done in a batch mode. Currently, parallel systems are in use for recording court transactions. Batch processing is used to provide statistical reports.

The court has developed internal systems capability and, hence, can modify and expand their systems to meet future needs.

2. Colorado Supreme Court; Denver, Colorado

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Colorado has a centrally administered and funded court system for all district and county courts in the state with the exception of the Denver County Court. District courts in Colorado are the courts of general jurisdiction, including probate jurisdiction, and are equivalent to the combination of circuit and probate courts in Michigan. The county courts are courts of limited jurisdiction. Colorado also has a municipal court system for traffic and local ordinance violations which are not part of the central system. These courts are locally funded and all revenues from the courts are returned to the local legislative treasurers. The central system is funded by the state legislature and all court revenues are returned to the state general fund.

The statistical reporting system is a batch processing system run once a month by The McDonnell Douglas Automation Company. The input from the courts is a one-line status report of all cases that have transactions occurring during the month. The input forms are unique for the various judicial processes, i. e., Civil, Juvenile, Probate, Domestic Relations and Mental Health. These sheets are manually prepared by court personnel within the individual courts during the processing of their internal paperwork.

The courts post to the input sheets through the last working day of the month and they are due in the Supreme Court Administrator's office on the 6th day

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of the following month. The entire package is turned over to the service bureau for keypunching and processing to be completed and back to the Administrator's office by the 15th. July's activity had 20,000 case inputs and an open case load of 57,000. Keypunch costs were \$900 and processing costs \$1,800.

The basic output report is a listing by district and county court, by judge, of all open cases with its present status. Beyond this there are many special summary reports on case loads by court and judge (Colorado uses individual calendar system exclusively) aging of cases, total case time by type, etc.

One of the most useful outputs was purported to be a summary of cases that have had no action for the past 60 days. This was used as a follow-up tool with each respective chief judge in the district to find out why the cases were delayed.

A system such as this seems like a valid starting point in any state-wide approach to control for the following reasons:

- a. It gives the Supreme Court a continuing picture of where the problems are and where further systems development efforts are required.
- b. It requires all courts to adopt a standard reporting system and, therefore, to keep common case records within the courts.
- c. It forces all courts to review their internal case load at least once monthly.
- d. It is a rather simple, inexpensive system to install.

3. Los Angeles County Superior Court; Los Angeles, California

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The Los Angeles Superior Court has automated some of its functions. The "Register of Action" (docket) contains a complete history of each case including final dispositions and any appeals. Likewise an attorney engagement file is automated and printed in its entirety each night. This printout is used for scheduling cases at times open to both attorneys. The attorney engagement file has been in operation for about 4 years and has been working very well the last two years. They expect to develop an automated master calendar system in the near future.

Jury selection is also automated. However, the current system is being revised. A report describing this proposed system is one of the reports gathered by the Special Industry Advisory Group and is listed in the bibliography.

The Los Angeles Supreme Court consists of 9 branches. The current systems apply to all 9 branches and, hence, attorney conflicts among these courts are eliminated. Participation on the part of attorneys has been good and data applicable to them - such as vacations and court appearances elsewhere - has also been entered into the file.

All computer work for the Los Angeles County Superior Court is done in the Los Angeles County Data Processing Department which is equipped with two IBM-360, Model 50 computers.

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4. Discussions with Mr. Eldridge Adams, Director of Research and Development, Los Angeles County Supreme Court, and widely known consultant.

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Two members of the Special Industry Advisory Group discussed the "state-ofthe-art" of court systems as viewed by Mr. Eldridge Adams, a systems consultant on court studies. The following summarizes the general observations offered by Mr. Adams:

- a. Having judges elected causes political overtones within the courts.
- b. Coordination of efforts has been difficult because of autonomy of courts' administrative policies.
- c. Funding of court projects at the local legislative level has slowed progress because of the priorities of the courts for funds is established along with the priorities of all other local government agencies.
- d. Mr. Adams has strong convictions that the courts must have internal systems capability to make progress.
- e. He also thinks the fragmented approach that is being taken in most locations is healthy to develop new ideas for court systems support. The state-of-the-art is so new that he does not feel that a viable system has yet emerged that is adequate for a standard approach.
- f. He does not think that private industry experience is applicable to the court system because of the political influence in the courts.
- g. Mr. Adams thinks that a computer based docketing system has merit.
- h. He is currently researching calendaring systems and has no conclusions on the impact of the computer for this purpose.

5. Los Angeles Municipal Court; Los Angeles, California

Currently the Los Angeles Municipal Court is using computerized systems for moving vehicle traffic violations, personal services and parking violations, register of actions (of small claims), indices, cash bond registers and refunds. Future plans include the mechanization of the master calendar and bail bond record keeping.

Los Angeles County has a Data Processing Department which provides computer services to all county functions. This facility is equipped with two IBM-360, Model 50's capable of both batch and on-line video terminal operation. The Municipal Court uses this equipment in both the batch and on-line mode.

The moving vehicle traffic violations system is implemented on this equipment as an on-line video terminal system. Their former (manual) system became very cumbersome and unmanageable as the volume of cases increased. The principle benefits were a timely operational system, some (but small) increase in collections, an increase in the productivity of the personnel needed to operate the system, and the ability to handle a greater number of cases without increasing the number of personnel or equipment.

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Some of the computerized applications are both batch and on-line oriented. Terminal use is controlled as to the nature of on-line file modifications which can be made and as to the data available for display (i.e., security). Inquiries limited to portions of the file available to specific terminals - can be made with immediate response.

In addition to being able to have current information on case status, the availability of the data in the file provides the capability of producing numerous statistical reports which are of value to the judges and to the court administrators.

6. Regional Justice Information Systems (RJIS); Los Angeles, California

RJIS is a joint study between the courts, the prosecutor, law enforcement, probation, corrections, the parole administrator, and an outside firm (Systems Development Corporation) to develop an integrated justice information system for tage by the courts, law enforcement, corrections, and other branches of justice.

The objectives of RJIS are to:

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- a. Integrate current and new information handling procedures into a County-wide case following system.
- b. Develop a solution mechanism that collects and disseminates information to improve the system of justice.
- c. Increase management awareness of system capabilities and operations.
- d. Improve interaction and coordination among county criminal justice agencies.

The program is a long-range program calling for a certain amount of uniformity as well as the development of an information system to meet the information need of all participating units. Included within this system is a communications (microwave). system for rapid transmission of information both administrative information and data.

The current effort is devoted to systems specification. It is in the 14th month of an 18-month contract. While the participants expressed confidence the project would be continued to completion, we saw no evidence of funding beyond the initial 18-month study period.

RJIS is a large scale total information system for judicial agencies. It is comprehensive and has many good qualities. When implemented, it will have many basic functions which would be useful to court and justice systems elsewhere.

7. The Criminal Court of the City of New York; New York, N. Y.

The Criminal Court of the City of New York has made only relatively minor use of computers to date, concentrating much of its efforts on streamlining of the organization and simplification of forms and manual methods. However, much has been done in the development of a "Judicial System to Increase Court Effectiveness". This appears to be an overall justice system including law enforcement, district attorney, courts, probation, correction, etc. The reader is referred to the bibliography for a complete description of this system. Overall observations are as follows:

- a. Make sure that up-to-date, sound management policies and procedures are developed and adhered to.
- b. Do the system design work before making the decision to computerize.
- c. It is more likely that computers would result in increased costs, but that computerization is necessary in order to provide improved services.
- d. The Criminal Court structure in New York had not provided any clear-cut lines of authority or well-documented written procedures.
- e. As a result of a study made under the leadership of the Economic Development Council, specific changes have been made in the administration organization, the firming up of procedures, and the cutting down on the number of events to be recorded. The steps which have been taken thus far are expected to result in a cost savings of about one-third. Additional savings are expected from future work with respect to form simplification.
- f. Routine traffic cases have been taken out of the criminal courts. Such cases are now handled as civil matters. New York found that treating traffic violations as crimes caused unnecessary delay and misuse of judicial talent.
- g. Computerization is a natural with respect to traffic violations, but computerization is not expected to achieve any cost savings with respect to the criminal courts. However, there is a need for improved and more comprehensive data banks for the Criminal Court in order to strengthen the law enforcement procedures throughout the country generally.

8. Maricopa County Court; Phoenix, Arizona

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The Arizona State Supreme Court has no central planning body for court systems, but the two major counties, Maricopa and Pima, are developing common systems on a cooperative basis.

Maricopa County has a Central Data Processing plan but the Court is not participating. They are proceeding independently. The courts are financed out of county funds under the control of a County Board of Supervisors.

The Court is not currently using computerized system. However, they have engaged a consultant, Data Guard Systems, Inc., to develop systems design specifications. They expect to use the State Police computer (IBM 360/40) when the system is implemented.

A Kodak Recordex Microfilm system (\$75,000) is used as an indexing and docketing system. New cases are assigned numbers prior to being microfilmed in the same manner as in Wayne County Courts.

As a case progresses through the process, each document is microfilmed and put in sequence into a celluloid case jacket.

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When an inquiry on a case is made, the appropriate microfilm master file for plaintiff or defendant is searched mechanically by the microfilm viewer by entering last name, first name and middle initial. The original complaint document is displayed with case number posted previously.

The celluloid jacket is then retrieved manually and the documents in the jacket are viewed to determine status of the case.

If a record is required, then either a microfilm duplicate of the jacket or hard copy of the individual documents are produced for 50¢ each.

The celluloid jacket has displayed the manual docket books except for old cases that are still in progress.

The microfilm system has provided about 30% increase in capacity over the manual system. No reduction in clerical support was achieved, but the work force has been stabilized for two years. Prior to the installation of the new system, the clerk's office was experiencing a 15% increase in clerical help each year as a result of increasing workload.

9. Common Pleas Court; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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This Court handles all city criminal and civil cases, but not traffic. In civil suits, an arbitration procedure is used for cases with an award value of less than \$10,000. This procedure has significantly speeded up civil actions.

An IBM Application Brief, <u>Data Processing in the Courts of Philadelphia</u>, describes in detail the computer applications of this Court.

As in other courts, mechanization has not resulted in the elimination of jobs. However, personnel have been retrained and additional hiring has been unnecessary. Also, as in other courts visited, Philadelphia began with hardware and without any comprehensive systems plans.

The data processing activity is staffed with 25 people: 8 programmers, 9 keypunch operators, 7 computer operators, and the director. Currently installed is an IBM 360/40 computer which is operated on a 3-shift, 7-day week basis. Current annual costs for this operation are around \$1,157,000 including \$537,000 for data processing personnel.

10. San Diego Superior Court; San Diego, California

About three years ago, computer vendors (including IBM) and consultants became interested and submitted proposals for the development of a computerized court system. This effort resulted in the development of IBM's court system - Basic Court System (BCS) - now available for lease at \$700 per month. This system provides for calendar, case history, indices of various types, attorney engagement file, name file (of individuals involved in various cases), and for basic information which is useful for the administration of the court. However, to use this information, it was necessary for San Diego County to provide additional software (\$12,000 systems and programming effort). These modifications provide such things as:

a. Three alternative dates which are open for both prosecuting and defense attorneys.

b. Backlog of cases by attorney.

c. Continuances, number of times, and reasons.

- d. Information for judicial council.
- e. Prints notices, daily calendar, etc.

It was pointed out emphatically that one of the most important tasks to perform is to "condition the court" to the use of a mechanized information system. Such a system is only a tool which can be useful if all court personnel are willing to use it. If not, it is of no value whatsoever.

BCS is an on-line system using cathode-ray tube terminals. Much of the information (for example - calendaring information) requires current status and, hence, is updated on-line. The system is run on a county operated data center using an IBM 360/50.

The equipment cost (to the court) is \$4,300 per month. The cost to operate a courtroom is \$1,000 per day. Other courts costs are about \$500 a day. It is estimated that if three court days a month can be saved, the system pays for itself. As many as 25 court days a month have been saved. It was felt that automation builds in a discipline which can improve the entire justice system.

It appears that the BCS system has improved the operation of the San Diego Superior Courts. Their personnel are adjusted to the sytem and are using it to the Court's advantage.

Non-computer systems improvements include a program of microfilming every paper pertinent to a case as it is received. These microfilms are collected by case in microfiche form. This eliminates microfilming at file disposal time and provides for complete reconstruction of a case should a file be lost. When fully implemented, the microfiche file will replace the current docket system.

11. San Diego Municipal Court; San Diego, California

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The San Diego Municipal Court uses a computer system to handle traffic violations (parking violations are handled separately by the City of San Diego). It is a batch processing system with a typewriter terminal inquiry capability. The Municipal Court obtains its computer services form the San Diego County Data Center, which also provides computer services to the San Diego Superior Court.

The Municipal Court's workload consists of criminal cases (75%) and civil cases (25%). They are now preparing to use the Basic Court System for their criminal case workload. They will use as much of the data compiled by the San Diego Superior Court as is applicable to their work. For example, they will use the basic-attorney file, adding to it those attorneys who limit their practices to criminal law.

The Municipal Court expects to make improvement in operations comparable to that gained by the San Diego Superior Court. They will use the same computer, the same software, plus any additional software they may require for their specific needs.

12. Superior Court of the City and County of San Francisco, California

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The San Francisco Superior Court is unusual in that the city and county governmental functions have been consolidated. Because the county has had a static population, it has had a relatively static tax base for funding county departments. This has had the effect of preventing the court from getting increased funds for systems developments.

The court's methods are almost entirely manual. Their procedures and methods for registering, indexing, calendaring, docketing and file retention are very similar to those of Wayne County Circuit Court.

The county finance organization has a very sophisticated systems and data processing organization. Its staff level of 288 people contains 70 systems and programmer type people. Equipment consits of an IBM 360/65 and 370-155 main frames with two 360/20 input-output front-end computers and 5-2314 disc files. A 2260 network is installed within the financial organization for budgeting purposes. The organization also has an optical scanner for data input.

The San Francisco City and County systems and data processing organization has responsibility for providing systems development for the County Superior Court, but to date has given the court projects very low priority. The only installed application is for jury selection. A batch calendaring system has been developed and is currently being implemented for the criminal side of the Superior Court.

13. Discussions with Mr. Ralph Klepps, Administrative Director of California Judicial Council

The Judicial Council formed in 1966, is the policy, procedural and administrative authority over all California courts. The committee is made up of members from the Supreme Court, Appellate Court, Superior Court, Municipal Court, lawyers and leaders of the judicial committees of the two legislative houses. The committee is chaired by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and has a staff under the Administrative Director to support the committee.

The council has formulated and published general rules for administration of courts. The council has made no attempt as yet to provide guidance or control of state-wide court systems. Mr. Klepps sees this as the responsibility of the council and they are just now beginning to address the problem. He has on his staff, a systems man, and is attempting to acquire an LEAA grant to study the problem of statewide data processing systems.

The primary function of the council to date has been to work with the state legislature to get the necessary laws passed to help the courts and to prevent legislation which would impede the courts. Legislation for a constitutional referendum to centralize funding of California courts has passed one house and is pending in the other. The council is concerned about the funding problem if this legislation is enacted and the referendum passes. His estimate is that it will require an additional \$250 million per year from the state level to fund the courts unless the revenue from the local courts is diverted to the state treasury. His view is that any attempt to divert these funds (primarily traffic) away from the local units would be a political disaster. Booze, Allen, and Hamilton Mangement Consultants have recently completed a study on a proposal for central administration of the state court system through regional centers. He did not disclose the contents of the study or the recommendations but said that a copy would be made available to Michigan on request after the September 15, 1971, publication date. He did not give the impression that the study involved any uniform systems consideration, but rather was directed toward more effective court organization structure and administrative control.

The state has a central systems and data processing organization under the Finance Director. The state legislature recently abolished the state Management Services Office (which was roughly the equivalent of Michigan's SOMMIS) and returned this responsibility to the state finance organization. Under the new organization, both the legislative and judicial branches are exempt from any state level systems and data processing plan. This leaves the organization to support development and provide services only for the state executive branch.

Mr. Klepps recognizes the actual and potential of further duplication of systems developments in California, but doesn't think it can be eliminated in the short term. He also thinks the Federal LEAA program has been effective in getting some progress under way that probably would not have been accomplished with existing funding within the state.

14. District of Columbia Superior Court; Washington, D. C.

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Reorganization of this court started in early 1971 and will continue over the next three years at which time the court will have general civil and criminal jurisdiction in the D. C. area. This court has 37 judges. The data processing activity reports to the executive officer of the court who is an appointee of the presiding judge.

In 1964, District of Columbia issued one-half million tickets annually and satisfied only 12% to 15%. A system, devised and installed by IBM in 1964 produced dramatic increases in the collection rate. As volume increased to the present rate of over 1,200,000 tickets annually, an IBM 360/40 was installed. Currently, over 68% of the tickets issued are collected which more than pays for the cost of the computer. The system also fowards information on unpaid tickets to the Washington Area Law Enforcement System (WALES). Whenever a car is stopped on a moving violation, a computer check is made with WALES for outstanding violations.

Currently, there are 2 systems analysts and 5 programmers in the data processing organization. Annual data processing costs are around \$600,000 which is more than justified by increasing traffic ticket collections of about \$3 million annually.

The Superior Court's computer facilities are also used for processing other court applications, such as:

- a. Jury Selection: Selects jury panels and mail questionnaires for both the Superior Court and Federal District Court, grand and petit juries.
- b. Alimony and Child Support: Produces all check, mailing data and monthly reports for the Welfare Department.
- c. Civil Cases: Plan to use the Philadelphia system.
- d. Criminal Cases: On-line retrieval system under development.

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PART II

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE MICHIGAN COURT SYSTEM

The Special Industry Advisory Group visited and reviewed administrative practices at the following Michigan courts:

Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit Traffic and Ordinance Division of Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit Circuit Courts:

> Wayne County Kalamazoo County Genesee County

Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit The Probate Court, Wayne County District Courts:

> 8th District, Kalamazoo (County) 9th District, 1st Division, Kalamazoo (City) 9th District, 2nd Division, Portage 46th District, Southfield

Municipal Court:

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City of Highland Park

These reviews were intended to provide an overview of the Michigan Court System and to identify probable opportunities for systems improvements. Time did not permit the more detailed studies that would be needed for the development of specific systems.

In view of the similarity of the various courts throughout Michigan, it is believed that other courts could benefit from a systems study to further identify these similarities and to recognize the special requirements these courts might have. The Special Industry Advisory Group did not attempt to study the outstate courts in all their nuances, but rather confined our studies to the more populous areas and in selected Michigan courts where identified computer applications have already been installed. However, the Supreme Court recently sent a "Technology Questionnaire" to all trial courts in Michigan. The results of this questionnaire will provide additional needed information on the problems of the individual courts and the actions already being taken.

A brief description of each of the major opportunities for systems improvements is given below.

1. Case Information Control System

Current information on case loads and case status for general use at the Supreme Court and in the various lower courts appears to be less extensive than would be desirable. We understand that Recorder's Court Judge Joseph A. Gillis has made a previous suggestion to the Supreme Court for an improved case information control system. In addition, court personnel from other courts visited impressed us with this same need. Without such a system, it is difficult for the large lower courts to maintain control over their case loads and for the Supreme Court to discharge effectively its constitutional responsibility for "general superintending control over all courts".

The State of Colorado, with a centrally controlled and funded court organization, has installed a statistical control system that may provide a useful prototype for a similar system in Michigan. Under the Colorado plan, the lower courts submit to the Supreme Court Administrator key data on new cases filed and selected transaction data on all open cases. Inactive cases are not reported. The data is keypunched and processed centrally. Output from the system gives a complete inventory, by district, county and judge of all open cases; a summary by type and location of all new cases filed; an aging report of inactive cases, with identification of the point where each case stopped within the process; and other significant information on offenses, pleas, jury utilization, and dispositions.

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The computer programs developed by Colorado could be made available without charge to Michigan, and it appears that the reporting procedures could be installed at low cost. The reporting requirements for individual courts could replace the present quarterly tabulations now required.

An information system of this kind could be an important first step toward more uniform court practices because it would:

- 1. Provide a factual basis for developing and maintaining uniform policies, procedures, and court rules.
- 2. Give all courts control information required to move cases in a timely manner.
- 3. Identify where further systems developments within the individual courts could be effectively installed to improve control of cases.

The cost of this system on active cases in Colorado is \$2,700.00 per month for data keypunching and processing 20,000 case transactions with an open case load of 57,000. Preparation of the input data within the lower courts would be done manually until such time as mechanical systems are installed within the courts.

The procedure could be used monthly or quarterly, and be applied to all courts or selected courts as deemed practical for Michigan. Even though the report is proposed to be run centrally, copies of case status reports should be returned to the reporting courts to allow them to more effectively manage their case loads.

2. Traffic and Ordinance Division of Recorder's Court, City of Detroit

Development of a computer system for processing and control of traffic violations through this court should proceed as rapidly as possible. The present systems for recording violations and controlling funds is inefficient for the volume of transactions currently handled in this court (about 100,000 cases monthly). It appears that substantial benefits would be obtainable through computerization. A feasibility report published by the consulting firm of Ernst & Ernst in October, 1970 appears to be basically sound, and it should be used as a point of departure for further systems design. Two areas of this report should be carefully reviewed during subsequent study; however:

- 1. It appears that the equipment requirement for computer processing is understated. We do not believe this workload could be added to the Police Department computer operation (as proposed by Ernst & Ernst) without substantially more upgrading of equipment than was identified in this report.
- 2. The costs for launching the system probably will be greater than estimated because of the problem of relocating or retraining any clerical people who will not be required with a computer system. The study indicates that this can be accomplished in four months. It seems unlikely to us that the necessary organizational transition can be accomplished in such a short period of time. We believe it would be helpful for the Court, at an early stage, to review these transitional problems of retraining and relocation of personnel with the affected employees' union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

As noted in Part III of this report, it may be possible to "transplant" all or a part of an existing system successfully operating elsewhere.

Funds are currently available to initiate this project through a \$184,000 grant from Law Enforcement Assistance Agency (LEAA), and an appropriation of \$125,000 from the City of Detroit. The judges and administrative personnel in the Traffic Court are enthusiastic about this project, and they are eager to proceed as soon as possible.

3. Recorder's Court, City of Detroit

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The Recorder's Court, with exclusive jurisdiction over all criminal cases for the City of Detroit, has experienced an increase of 86% in felony warrants since 1964. Case recording, record keeping, and control information are almost completely manual in this court, except in the Probation Department which uses a computerized reporting procedure for case status.

The judges of Recorder's Court have been aggressively pursuing programs for improving court functions and considering improvements attainable through the use of modern data processing techniques.

We believe that areas of potential application are:

1. <u>Case Indexing</u> - Cross-reference files between case numbers and key-name information are required to find case folders when an inquiry is made on a case. The resulting index tends to be cumbersome and inefficient.

This application has been computerized in Philadelphia, San Diego, and Cook County. A microfilm application has been installed for this function in Phoenix, Arizona for the Maricopa County Superior Court.

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2. <u>Docketing Cases</u> - Summary progress records are maintained for each case to provide reference to case status and to maintain a permanent record of the case as it has progressed through the court. These records are posted manually from the paper flow of case documents, and the task involves considerable clerical effort. Such records can be derived through a video display terminal or paper copy from a computer-based system that records case transactions. Variations of this approach are being developed in Philadelphia and Cook County.

The docketing function can also be eliminated through the microfilming techniques used in Maricopa County, Arizona Superior Court, and in San Diego Superior Court. One advantage of this technique is that it makes copies of key documents readily available. The system is considered to have resulted in cost savings.

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3. <u>Calendaring</u> - More effective scheduling of court activity could be accomplished with a computer-based system designed to assure conflict-free dates for attorneys and court personnel. In addition, notices of court appearances to all parties, i.e., police, jail personnel, bondsmen and witnesses could be produced mechanically from a computer system.

It is unlikely that an attorney scheduling system for Recorder's Court only would be effective. This would not recognize the potential conflicts arising from other court jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Detroit area. It would be desirable, therefore, to cover as many metropolitan courts as possible in this system.

Attorney scheduling systems are currently operational in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and San Diego. In addition, San Francisco Superior Court is installing a calendaring system as a stand-alone batch system.

4. <u>Interface to Other Criminal Agencies</u> - A computer system in Recorder's Court would give the Court the ability to exchange information quickly and accurately with police agencies, the prosecutor's office, and correctional and detention institutions.

In order to have an effective criminal court system, information on criminal records, bond or detention status, warrant information, pleas, and disposition must pass among these agencies.

5. <u>Case Statistical Information</u> - An important by-product of a computerized court system is statistical data for management analysis and control of the judicial process. Information such as case delays, court facility utilization, jury management, open case loads, and length of trials could give court personnel information needed to more effectively manage a large multi-judge court.

Jury Selection - Computer programs are available to perform this function. These programs are not directly related to the other functions discussed above, and a single computer system for jury selection could serve all courts within the county. All that is necessary would be a voter registration roll and selection criteria provided by the Jury Commission(s).

Computer jury selection systems are currently used in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Annual costs of such computer and microfilm applications to Recorder's Court might range from \$300,000 upward (depending on systems design), and it is unlikely that these costs could be fully offset by immediate savings elsewhere. There would be important long-term benefits, however, including the following:

- 1. Better control over cases through improved scheduling and positive identification of delays.
- 2. More accurate and accessible court records with reduced clerical effort.
- 3. Better information flow among all agencies involved in the criminal justice process.
- 4. A potential reduction in floor space required for administrative support of the court.

A grant of \$249,900 for developing a computer system has been approved by the LEAA, and the Common Council has agreed to implement this with contributions amounting to \$166,600 (including space rental).

4. Circuit Courts

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Potential applications for criminal cases in the Circuit Courts are similar to those previously mentioned for Recorder's Court. It seems both possible and desirable to develop a single basic system that would be applicable not only to Recorder's Court but to the large Circuit Courts as well.

In addition, some Circuit Courts have a need for improved control over civil cases. The applications listed above would be similar for both civil cases and criminal cases. It seems desirable, therefore, to design a "Basic Michigan Court System" that could handle both criminal and civil cases with as much commonality as possible. This need not imply concurrent launching of both the criminal and civil applications. Rather, what is needed is an orderly plan that takes into account the needs of the major court environments, both criminal and civil, to be served as the system evolves.

The Friend of the Court Division, Wayne County Circuit Court, currently has a computer system for the collection and disbursement of alimony and child support payments. In many areas, the information contained in the Friend of the Court's records is identical to that maintained in the files of the Clerk of the Court. Eventually, as the civil functions of the court are computerized, there will be a need to coordinate the computer files of the court system with those of the Friend of the Court.

5. Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit

This court has limited jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases in Wayne County. In other counties these functions are included in the Circuit, District, and Municipal (where remaining) Court jurisdictions. The Common Pleas process is similar to that of the civil side of the Circuit Court. The similar applications of indexing, docketing, calendaring, statistical information, and jury selection are largely applicable here with similar potential benefits. This Court also has responsibility for collection and disbursement of funds. This is an application that has potential for improvement through computerization.

Development of systems for this Court should be coordinated with that for the civil side of the Circuit Court, wherever possible, to avoid duplication of effort and excessive costs. In some cases, the difference in dollar jurisdiction limits and type of case processed may require special programs for the Common Pleas Court.

6. Wayne County Probate Court

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The probate functions are unique, and it does not appear feasible to combine systems development for this Court with that of other civil courts. Two specific applications already described, indexing of cases and docketing, are similar in this Court to the other courts, and it is possible that the programs to handle these functions in the suggested "Basic Michigan Court System" could be adapted readily to Probate Courts.

Various follow-up applications appear well suited to computerization. Benefits would include both improved effectiveness of the follow-up process and the possible avoidance of clerical cost increases to handle increasing workloads.

The probate process (with the possible exception of the Juvenile Division which we did not study) appears to be readily adaptable to computerbased systems. Probate Court personnel are eager to improve their systems for better control and efficiency, and have made a number of studies toward this end. It is suggested that a systems development program be undertaken in this Court in the latter part of 1972, so that some experience will be available from the other projects now being planned.

It is also suggested that this effort be undertaken with the needs of other Michigan Probate Courts in mind. We believe a single probate data processing system could be widely used in Michigan.

7. District Courts

The District Courts, particularly in Wayne County, will need to be involved with the development of the "Basic Michigan Court System" because of their responsibility in the felony criminal process for holding the first arraignment and preliminary examination in some cases.

The rest of their criminal work is concerned with misdemeanors, including motor vehicle and local ordinance violations. The principal control problems are for case follow-up, and the collection and disbursement of funds to the appropriate agencies of fines collected by the Court. Two district courts, located in Portage and Bloomfield Hills, were identified as using a computer service bureau program for these functions, and for developing statistical information required by the Supreme Court. The system is adequate for their needs, and relatively inexpensive at the case volumes involved. There has been a lack of programming maintenance support, however, because of the merger of the original contractor with another company. A District Court, sitting in Southfield, has developed a criminal case computer system that produces statistical data, assists in case calendaring, and handles court accounting. The daily, weekly, and monthly computer processing is handled by a local service bureau which also developed the programs to the court's specifications. The same system is now being installed in two other District Courts located in Livonia and Westland.

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Consideration should be given to creating a standardized program which could be developed and maintained centrally for use in the District Courts. Such a plan would have the advantage of a low development cost, and it would not require each individual district to develop their own systems expertise. Assurance of continued maintenance of the system would also be accomplished.

PART III

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH

General Conditions

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The success of a systems development effort depends to a great extent upon its organizational structure. If the new system is seen by its prospective users as an alien influence, or if its use is not understood and supported, the system is likely to fail no matter how sophisticated its design and programs. Very simple systems, on the other hand, can produce remarkable results if they are enthusiastically supported and understood by the user activity.

A first objective of systems organization, therefore, is that the users must identify with the systems effort from the start, and they must actively participate in the development effort. A corollary is that the systems analysts and programmers must see their efforts as part of the user agency's program and not as an independent effort.

A second objective of systems organization is to obtain economy of effort. From a hardware standpoint, this implies the sharing of computer resources with other activities until an economical level of utilization is realized. (With computer hardware, this might mean at least 400 hours of utilization each month of large-scale equipment.) From a systems analysis and programming standpoint, it means sharing development costs with other activities having a similar requirement (other comparable courts, in this case).

A third objective is to obtain reasonable consistency of output and procedures among activities that are closely related -- for example, among the Circuit Courts, the Probate Courts, and the District Courts of Michigan. This consistency need not be carried to the point of complete uniformity, but it should be fostered to the extent that attorneys practicing in several jurisdictions do not face sharply different procedures from county to county. There should also be sufficient consistency among courts to facilitate the Supreme Court's constitutional supervisory functions.

The recommendations that follow are made with these objectives in mind.

1. Supervision of Systems Programs Throughout the Michigan Courts

It is recommended that the Supreme Court establish a new position of "Director of Systems", to report to the Supreme Court Administrator. The individual selected for this position should have extensive background in the development and operation of computer-based systems, and work experience in the field of public administration would be desirable. Because of the decentralized organizational pattern of our court system, this official will require unusual qualities of leadership, judgment, and maturity.

The duties of this position would include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a. He should be responsible for developing improved information systems needed by the Supreme Court and the Michigan Judiciary as a whole for expediting and improving the handling of case flow.
- b. He should assist, cooperate with, and help service all Michigan courts in developing systems and computer applications. He should participate in the selection of the Systems Manager in each court that has such a position, as well as in the selection of his own staff.
- c. He should prescribe common coding practices for use in computerbased systems. He would also review over-all standards of record keeping and records retention.
- d. He should exercise the right of prior review over any new computer-based information system before it is installed in any Michigan court. This review might provide the basis for recommending approval or disapproval of the new system by the Supreme Court Administration Committee.
- e. He should foster the development of "common systems" where a single development effort can serve more than one court.
- f. He should participate in the design and development of any major court systems.
- g. He should systematically review the practices and procedures used throughout the Michigan Court System, regardless of whether they are suitable for computerization. (We believe that some of the most desirable improvements may not involve any form of mechanization.)

It appears to us that this official might appropriately be supported, under present conditions, by about five systems analysts, with responsibilities such as the following:

- 1. Development of the proposed Case Information Control System.
- 2. Participation in the development of a system for the Traffic and Ordinance Division of the Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit.
- 3. Participation in the development of the proposed Basic Michigan Court System.
- 4. Systems coordination of the District and Municipal Courts.
- 5. Systems review and planning for the Probate Courts.

2. Systems Coordinators in Individual Courts

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A. large-volume court undertaking a significant program of computerization should consider creating a position of "Systems Manager" or "Systems Coordinator". This individual would be the focal point for:

a. Determining systems requirements and responding to the needs of his court.

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- b. Keeping officials of the court informed of systems plans and problems.
- c. Conducting necessary training programs.
- d. Controlling the data inputs and the system outputs when a computer-based system becomes operational.
- e. Interfacing with the Supreme Court's Director of Systems and with the systems personnel of related agencies.

The size of staff assigned to this official may vary according to the scope and character of any computer-based systems adopted by his court.

In smaller courts, it may be desirable to assign these responsibilities to the Clerk or Court Administrator.

3. Project Organization and Resources

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Aside from the suggested Case Information Control System discussed in Part II, the two most pressing computerization projects identified in our survey involve: (a) the Traffic and Ordinance Division of Recorder's Court, and (b) what might be termed a "Basic Michigan Court System" that could serve the criminal and civil functions of the Recorder's Court and the Circuit Courts in Wayne County and other metropolitan areas. Most discussion related to the latter project has focused on the Recorder's Court. It appears to us, however, that any project undertaken for the Recorder's Court should be broadened so as to take into account design features that could make a modified version of this system adaptable to the criminal and civil functions of the larger Circuit Courts. It may also be possible to adapt some features of this basic system to the Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit.

The suggestions that follow relate primarily to these two immediate projects. Essentially the same project organization could also be applied, however, to a systems development effort for the Probate Courts. It is suggested that a Probate Court project not be launched before mid-1972; this delay would be more than offset by the experience gained in the early months of the first two projects.

We believe that these projects should be undertaken by teams with varied representation and skills, and that their work should be supervised on a regular basis by Steering Committees comprised of senior officials in the affected courts. This approach is outlined below in relation to the two priority projects discussed here:

(a) <u>Traffic and Ordinance Division of the Recorder's Court of the</u> <u>City of Detroit</u>. At the time of our visit to this Court, tentative plans had been made to contract with the Federal Systems Division of IBM for a systems development project that would cost a minimum of \$400,000 and that would extend over a period of about 18 months. Although we are not categorically opposed to the use of outside firms for systems development, we believe this plan, as we understand it, to be undesirable because:

It tends to prejudge the type of hardware and software to be used.

It leaves to the consulting firm -- IBM, in this case -- the definition of problems for which solutions are needed. This should be the responsibility of court personnel.

. It makes inadequate provision for participation of the Traffic and Ordinance Division itself in the definition of problems and the formulation of a system concept.

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The problem of maintaining and operating the system after it is launched will be very difficult unless members of the Traffic and Ordinance Division staff participate actively at all stages of the system development.

. The development process -- an indispensable training exercise for an organization installing a large-scale computer system --would tend to train the consultants more than the court people who must live with the system and make it function. In doing so, the courts would unwittingly be subsidizing the fostering of their own dependence on outside firms.

. Development and launching costs are likely to be greater if the system is developed entirely by outsiders. (Costs per man-hour usually run 2-3 times as high for consultants as for in-house personnel.)

The approach of contracting with an outside consultant for development of such a system might possibly be successful if: (a) members of the Traffic and Ordinance Division staff participate in the study team on a full-time basis; (b) the work of the study team is supervised closely by a steering committee of judges and other key officials; and (c) a nucleus systems organization is developed at an early stage to participate in the programming and launching effort. Otherwise, we would see the consultant approach as one entailing high risks as well as high costs.

An alternate approach, which has been successful in similar projects in industry, is to organize a system development project within the customer organization. The project team, in this approach, would be under the management of the Traffic and Ordinance Division itself (under the suggested Systems Manager). There would also be participants from the proposed systems staff of the Supreme Court and, possibly, from the data processing activity of the City of Detroit. The team would be rounded out, technically, by several systems analysts and programmers from a local software company. The organizational objectives, under this approach, would be: (1) to develop a nucleus team that could continue the operation and maintenance of the system beyond its launching phase; (2) to bring a blending of skills and backgrounds into the processes of problem definition and system design; and (3) to handle the necessary interfaces with related systems such as LEIN (Law Enforcement Information Network of the Michigan State Police), and the licensing and registration systems of the Secretary of State.

Under this alternate organizational approach, we would again recommend that the work of the project team be supervised by a steering committee of judges and other key officials so as to assure that the system evolves along acceptable lines, and also to facilitate a full understanding of the system by those officials who will be dependent on its functions.

We visualize a four-phase development effort:

	Phase	Calendar <u>Months</u>	Approx. <u>Man-Months</u>
I.	Problem Definition and Conceptual Design	3	30
II.	Detailed Systems Specification and Development of Training Plans	3	30
III.	Programming and Launching	_9	100
	Total - Development and Launching	15	160

IV. Operation

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As part of Phase I, we would recommend that the Project Team review the details of the Traffic Court systems now being used successfully in Washington, D.C., Cook County, Illinois, and San Diego. Our preliminary review of these systems suggests that their features are very similar to those being considered in Detroit. As a minimum, it should be possible to transplant many of the input and output forms used in these successful systems. It may also be possible to transplant more or less intact a number of the programs and subroutines. Our experience has been that well-designed systems can frequently be transplanted to other organizations for a fraction of the costs that would be entailed in the development of all-new systems.

The recent Ernst & Ernst study of the Traffic and Ordinance Division recommended use of the computer hardware available at the Detroit Police Department. This configuration, presently consisting of an IBM 360/40 system, with a memory of 256,000 bytes and a DOS operating system, appears to us already to be used to its existing capacity. To implement the Ernst & Ernst recommendation, therefore, would require substantial upgrading or replacement of this equipment --probably with an IBM 370/155 or 370/165. This may be the best hardware solution available. We recommend, however, that the hardware decision remain open for further consideration during the Phase I study suggested above. The equipment required should, in any case, be adapted to the requirements of the system. Further study may well indicate that the particular requirements of this system could be met more economically at another location. It was noted, in this connection, that the Police Department computer system is almost entirely oriented to "real-time" operation. We believe that the new Traffic and Ordinance Division system is likely to be more oriented to batch processing, with some on-line inquiry capability. Its requirements, therefore, may be along different lines from the capability available at the Police Department.

All of the foregoing recommendations reflect our view that the data processing requirement in the Traffic and Ordinance Division is on a largeenough scale to require a nucleus of systems analysts and programmers to participate in the development of the system and to be responsible for its operation after the launching is complete. It follows that the success of the system may depend heavily on the caliber of the Systems Manager appointed to head this project. We believe he should be an individual with some experience in the successful development and operation of large-scale computer systems. He should possess strong qualities of leadership, energy, and ability to work with people, as well as technical skills. b. <u>Basic Michigan Court System.</u> The other immediate priority involves the development of a basic computer system to meet the needs of: (a) the criminal functions of Recorder's Court of the City of Detroit; (b) the criminal and civil functions of the Wayne County Circuit Court; (c) the criminal and civil functions of other large circuit courts; and (d) some of the civil functions of the Court of the City of Detroit.

The output functions of such a basic system might include the following:

. Case indexing

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- . Docketing and scheduling functions
- . Statistical analysis of case loads and backlogs
- . Feedback of data to the Prosecutor, the Police authorities, and other appropriate agencies. (We visualize this feedback in the form of transaction data and case records; these authorities will undoubtedly want to use these basic data for further analyses indicative of performance trends, but we would not see these specialized analyses as an appropriate area for inclusion in the court system itself.)
- . Attorney calendars to provide a basis for conflictfree scheduling
- . Paperwork and controls related to jury selection

The recent thrust for such development has been related to the proposed computer system for Recorder's Court. It appears to us, however, that the record-keeping and information-retrieval functions at Recorder's Court are not significantly different from those of the larger circuit courts.

Any attempt to develop a system for Recorder's Court only, therefore, would almost certainly be followed by an attempt to transplant or adapt that system to the needs of the circuit courts. We believe this commonality should be recognized at the outset through participation of these other courts in the development of a "Basic Michigan Court System" that could readily be adapted to meet the needs of any large circuit court.

There are several possible approaches to this kind of common development:

- 1. The proposed Recorder's Court project could proceed as originally planned, but with broadened participation in the Project Team by representatives of other interested courts and the Supreme Court. Adapted versions of the basic system would be installed over a period of time at the other courts.
- 2. An entirely new project could be organized under the sponsorship and management of the Supreme Court. This could lead to a "common system" operated by the Supreme Court as a service to the individual courts; or it could lead to a set of basic programs that could be used by each individual court as a starting point for its own operational systems.

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3. Under either of the above approaches, a systematic review could be made of possibilities for transplanting systems already developed elsewhere. This transplanting possibility, which we believe should be carefully considered, should give particular attention to the possibilities of using some or all of the systems that have been developed at Philadelphia; Alleghany County, Pennsylvania; and San Diego, California. (Most of these programs would be available to Michigan without cost.)

Because of the intense interest in this area at the Recorder's Court and the preliminary work already accomplished there, we are inclined to favor an organizational plan such as the first approach suggested above. This would mean that the project already proposed and funded for Recorder's Court could proceed immediately, although with broadened participation.

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As in the case of Traffic Court, we would recommend the organization of a Project Team, consisting of the proposed Systems Manager from Recorder's Court plus 2 or 3 systems analysts and programmers who would be Recorder's Court employees; representatives from the Circuit Courts of Wayne County, Oakland County, and Macomb County, and from the Common Pleas Court of the City of Detroit, a representative of the Supreme Court, and -- in selected stages -- representatives of one or more District Courts. The team might be rounded out with several analysts and programmers from a software consulting firm.

Similarly, there should be a Steering Committee consisting of both judges and clerks or administrators from each of the participating courts. The proposed Director of Systems in the Supreme Court should also be a member of this group, along with the Prosecutor or Assistant Prosecutor from Wayne County and representatives of the Bar.

We visualize the development of this Basic System, and its initial installation in the Recorder's Court and the Wayne County Circuit Court, as involving the same four phases as those described for the Traffic and Ordinance Division of Recorder's Court. Not all the elements of the Basic System are interactive with one another, however, so it may be possible and desirable to extend the development effort over a longer period of time. This could tend to reduce launching risks, and it would permit the participating courts to adjust to computer processes over an extended period. A computerized system of jury selection, for example, has been successful in several jurisdictions, and it appears to be a desirable long-term objective in Wayne County; there is no pressing reason why this particular subsystem should be undertaken immediately, however. Those subsystems related to indexing, docketing and scheduling, statistical analysis, attorney scheduling, and feedback of data to law enforcement agencies would appear to be more pressing as immediate objectives.

The development and operational costs of such a system would be heavily dependent on its content. A sophisticated, real-time system with numerous terminals (along the lines of the Los Angeles system, for example) would probably involve operational costs of several million dollars annually for the Detroit and Wayne County courts. A more modest system, with most data inputs in batch mode, on the other hand, might serve both Recorder's Court and the Wayne County Circuit Court for as little as \$500,000 annually.

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These costs are not likely to be fully recovered through direct savings. The benefits are more likely to take the form of improved scheduling practices, reduced backlogs, and an improved feedback of information to law enforcement agencies. We believe, therefore, that the systems development effort for this Basic System should be at a modest level, with the ultimate system evolving on a modular basis over a period of several years.

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Initial subsystems could be operational at Recorder's Court and Wayne County Circuit Court in less than a year if the "transplanting" approach suggested here proves practical. If all-new systems are developed, we would expect the first subsystems to be operational in about eighteen months.

4. <u>Systems Development Objectives.</u> In the approach we have outlined here, emphasis has been placed on the need for active participation of judges and other key court personnel in the systems development process, and on the need to follow an orderly, phased plan. We think it is worth repeating that computer systems in themselves have no value; value is obtained only to the extent that the systems help people in solving clearly defined problems. Unless agreement is reached during the first phase on what these problems are and what the computer systems are expected to accomplish, the systems outcome is likely to be a disappointment.

Appendix A

DESCRIPTION OF COURT PROCEDURES TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

ORGANIZATION

The Court Procedures Technology Committee is established under the direction of the Supreme Court of Michigan. Chief Justic Thomas M. Kavanagh has appointed Justice G. Mennen Williams as Chairman of the Supreme Court Electronic Computer Committee and as Chairman of this body. The mission of the Court Procedures Technology Committee is to consider problems and to recommend and advise the Supreme Court on policy decisions that should be made and on recommended priorities.

COURT PROCEDURES TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

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Chief Justice Thomas M. Kavanagh Seven Story Office Building Lansing, Michigan 48901

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Justice G. Mennen Williams 1425 Lafayette Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Justice Thomas E. Brennan (ex officio) Seven Story Office Building Lansing, Michigan 48901

Justice John B. Swainson (ex officio) Seven Story Office Building Lansing, Michigan 48901

Mr. Clayton J. Ploof Deputy Court Administrator, Supreme Court Seven Story Office Building Lansing, Michigan 48901

JUDGES

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Honorable Richard D. Dunn President Wayne County District Judges Association 8600 North Silvery Lane Dearborn Heights, Michigan 48127

Honorable Robert L. Evans Presiding Judge Recorder's Court Frank Murphy Hall of Justice 1441 St. Antoine Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable Ralph M. Freeman Chief Judge United States District Court Eastern Division of Michigan 718 Federal Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable William P. Hampton Presiding Judge Oakland County Circuit Court Courthouse Tower Pontiac, Michigan 48053

Honorable Stuart Hoffius Michigan Judges Association Hall of Justice Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

Honorable Frank E. Jeannette Presiding Judge Macomb County Circuit Court County Building Mt. Clemens, Michigan 48043

Honorable T. John Lesinski Chief Judge Court of Appeals 900 First Federal Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable James H. Lincoln Juvenile Judge 1025 East Forest Detroit, Michigan 48207

Honorable Joseph J. Pernick Probate Court 1309 City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226 Honorable Peter B. Spivak Presiding Judge Common Pleas Court of Detroit 911 City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable Joseph A. Sullivan Presiding Judge Wayne County Circuit Court 1611 City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable Andrew C. Wood Executive Judge, Traffic & Ordinance Division, Detroit Recorder's Court Old County Building 600 Randolph Detroit, Michigan 48226

JUDGES -- OUTSTATE AREAS WITH COMPUTERS

Honorable John W. Conlin Presiding Judge 22nd Circuit Court 215 County Building Ann Arbor, Michigan 48502

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Honorable Kenneth A. Fricke 9th District Court, 2nd Division 7810 Shaver Road Portage, Michigan 49081

Honorable Eliza H. Papp Presiding Judge 7th Circuit Court 308 Court House Flint, Michigan 48502

Honorable Elizabeth Ramsey 57th District Court County Building Allegan, Michigan 49010

Honorable Clarence A. Reid, Jr. Presiding Judge 46th District Court 26000 Evergreen Road Southfield, Michigan 48075

Honorable Lucien F. Sweet Presiding Judge 9th Circuit Court County Building Kalamazoo, Michigan 49006

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BAR AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Honorable William L. Cahalan Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney Frank Murphy Hall of Justice 1441 St. Antoine Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. William P. Cooney Regional Representative of Defense Research Institute 1000 Guardian Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. David J. Cooper, President Association of Defense Trial Counsel 561 East Jefferson Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Alvin R. Dasen House Fiscal Agency Room 117 - Upper Level State Capitol Building Lansing, Michigan 48901

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Mr. Edward Frohlich, President Detroit Bar Association 2212-14 Guardian Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Samuel C. Gardner, President Wolverine Bar Association 1632 Guardian Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Gus Harrison, Director Michigan Department of Corrections Mason Building, 3rd Floor Lansing, Michigan

Mr. Charles W. Joiner, President State Bar of Michigan 600 Woodward Avenue Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable Frank J. Kelley Attorney General, State of Michigan Seven Story Office Building 525 West Ottawa Lansing, Michigan 48902

Mr. Harvey A. Koselka, President Prosecuting Attorneys Association 201 Commercial Bank Building Adrian, Michigan 48922 Mr. Irving Kroll, President Michigan Trial Lawyers' Association 1935 First National Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable William Lucas Wayne County Sheriff 525 Clinton Street Detroit, Michigan 48226

Honorable John F. Nichols Detroit Police Commissioner 1300 Beaubien Detroit, Michigan

Colonel John R. Plants Director Michigan State Police 714 South Harrison East Lansing, Michigan

Mr. Myzell Sowell Chief Defender Legal Aid & Defender Association 462 Gratiot Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Joseph B. Sullivan Wayne County Clerk 201 City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Philip G. Tannian Executive Assistant to the Mayor Mayor's Office, City-County Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

Mr. Arthur J. Tarnow Director State Appellate Defender Association 13th Floor, Lafayette Building Detroit, Michigan 48226

(To Be Named) Representative of Michigan Senate

Appendix B

List of Out-of-State Contacts

Cook County, Illinois

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Jensen, James P. Director Management Information Systems Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court Room 1001 Chicago Civic Center Cook County, Illinois 60602 (Phone: A.C. 312, 321-8718)

Denver, Colorado

Hoffman, Beatrice State Court Statistical Administrator State Court Administrator's Office Denver, Colorado

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Howell, Nelson Sr. Budget and Fiscal Analyst State Court Administrator's Office Denver, Colorado

Lawson, Harry O. State Court Administrator Colorado Supreme Court 323 State Capitol Denver, Colorado 80203 (Phone: A.C. 303, 892-2681)

Los Angeles, California

Adams, Eldridge Director Research and Development Los Angeles Superior Court 111 North Hill St. Los Angeles, California (Phone: A.C. 213, 625-3414)

Bledsoe, Ralph C. Project Manager System Development Corporation 2500 Colorado Avenue Santa Monica, California 90406 (Phone: A.C. 213, 393-9411) Cholko, Fran Director Administrative Services Los Angeles Superior Court Los Angeles, California

Collis, Stanley R. Project Manager Systems Dynamics, Inc. Los Angeles, California (Phone: A.C. 213, 828-9411)

Cramer, Russell D. R.J.I.S. Representative Los Angeles Superior Court Los Angeles, California

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-

Evans, Paul Los Angeles County Clerk Los Angeles, California

Goodwin, William A. Jury Commissioner Los Angeles Superior Court Los Angeles, California

Gross, Thomas R. R.J.I.S. Assistant Project Director Department of Data Processing County of Los Angeles Suite 800 714 West Olympic Los Angeles, California 30015 (Phone: A.C. 213, 748-2477)

Holtzendorf, Judd Assistant Jury Commissioner Los Angeles Superior Court Los Angeles, California

Kavanaugh, Joe Civil Court Coordinator Los Angeles Superior Court Los Angeles, California

Krause, Marion Data Processing Coordinator Municipal Court Los Angeles Judicial District Los Angeles, California

Moore, Clinton Data Processing Coordinator Municipal Court Los Angeles Judicial District Los Angeles, California New York, New York

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Finley, Harold Staff Vice President Metropolitan Life Insurance Company New York, New York

Fitzenrider, George W. Director of Data Processing Criminal Court City of New York New York, New York

Goodchild, Lester C. Court Administrator Criminal Court City of New York New York, New York

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Blake, Edward Court Administrator Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Jamieson, Donald Presiding Judge Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Polansky, Larry Director of Data Processing Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

White, Jean M. Administrative Assistant to Court Administrator Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Phoenix, Arizona

Allison, Gordon Court Administrator Maricopa County Superior Court Phoenix, Arizona

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San Diego, California

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James, Robert Bud County Clerk County of San Diego 242 West B Street San Diego, California 92101

Petersen, John H. Clerk of the Municipal Court San Diego Judicial District County of San Diego County Court House San Diego, California 92101

San Francisco, California

Choy, Ray Systems Analysis Supervisor San Francisco County Data Processing Department 240 Von Ness Avenue San Francisco, California (Phone: A.C. 415, 558-2222)

Kleps, Ralph N. Administrative Director California Judicial Council State Building, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, Room 4200 San Francisco, California (Phone: A.C. 415, 557-1581)

Mongan, Martin Clerk San Francisco Superior Court Room 313, City Hall San Francisco, California (Phone: A.C. 415, 558-4082)

Washington, D.C.

Vaseleck, James Director Data Processing District of Columbia Superior Court Washington, D.C.

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