



# **2008 – 2010 STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **MISSION**

*To promote justice, professional excellence and respect for the law, foster the dignity and integrity of the profession, provide law-related services to the community, and serve the needs of our members.*

**Approved February 21, 2008**



**OUTCOME 1: Provide information, education, support and resources that assist lawyers in their practices.**

**OUTCOME BENCHMARK:** Increase solo/small firm participation in GRBA programs by 20% in year 1, by 20% in year 2, by 20% in year 3

Program and/or membership evaluations will reflect an increase satisfaction among section members

**STRATEGY A:** Evaluate, invigorate and support the sections.

**STRATEGY B:** Improve association-wide initiatives, to include addressing the needs of solo practitioners.

*Work Group: Kent Mudie, Paul Sorensen, Mike Quinn, Dick Hillary*

**STRATEGY A: Evaluate, invigorate and support the sections**

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Evaluate existing section structure and leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decide if all sections are needed or should be integrated elsewhere</li> <li>▪ Secure leadership for all viable sections</li> <li>▪ Meet with section chairs for discussion of structure, leadership, strategic plan and expectations. Involve section chairs in creating expectations</li> </ul>	February	January	Annually	Association President Section Liaison(s) Association Staff Section Leadership
2. Build a closer connection between bar leadership and section chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invite chairs to board meetings to report on goals for the year, program plans, and general meeting frequency, frequency of programs, value their section will bring, and plans or ideas to increase section membership</li> </ul>	September	On-going	On-going	Association president Section Liaison(s) Association Staff Section Leadership
3. Build section capacity/motivation for leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage sections to recruit strong leadership</li> <li>▪ Develop leadership training for chairs</li> <li>▪ Increase section chair visibility e.g. Website/in newsletter etc.</li> </ul>	February	On-going	On-going	Association Staff Section Leadership Section Liaison(s)
4. Enhance/increase section substantive programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist section leaders to identify topics, speakers and activities</li> <li>▪ Explore activities, topics and speakers used by local and national bar associations</li> </ul>	February	On-going	On-going	Section Leadership Section Liaison(s) Staff Liaison

**OUTCOME 1: Provide information, education, support and resources that assist lawyers in their practices.**

**STRATEGY B: Improve association-wide initiatives, to include addressing the needs of solo practitioners**

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Offer practice management/business skill development opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collaboration with existing organization such as SBM, ABA, etc.</li> </ul>	April October	April October	On-going	Program Committee Association Staff
2. Identify information gaps and work to remedy them e.g. Administrative Rules, Kent County Circuit local rules online, Judges and referees schedules online etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure lawyers are informed about availability of legal resources and how to access same</li> </ul>	May	On-going	On-going	Standing Committees Ad Hoc Committees Section Leadership Association Staff
3. Organize a strategy sessions or roundtable with solo practitioners to explore whether the strategic plan is working, to identify other membership needs, and discuss other possible initiatives	June October	On-going	On-going	Executive Committee Solo/Small Firm Practitioners Association Staff

## Critical Challenge #2: MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

*Work Group: Aaron S., Kevin O., Jennifer P., Ben H., Matt V.*

### OUTCOME 2: Foster a sense of engagement, collegiality and community among lawyers in Grand Rapids.

**OUTCOME BENCHMARK:** Members will report increased value and quality in comparison to the 2007 Member Survey; Increased attendance/participation programs and events

**STRATEGY A:** Foster a culture of participation and inclusion.

**STRATEGY B:** Create in-person interaction opportunities for social and professional development.

**STRATEGY C:** Virtual Interaction.

#### STRATEGY A: Foster a culture of participation and inclusion.

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Organize firm leadership or managing partner's roundtable to encourage firm "buy in," support and attorney participation	Sept.	Annually		Executive Committee Executive Director
2. Identify and implement incentives and programs to encourage firm membership e.g. 100% club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contact the various bar associations for ideas, suggestions and/or information regarding existing incentive programs</li> </ul>	August	On-going		Membership Committee Association Staff
3. Collaborate with, and coordinate the scheduling of activities with other organizations e.g. FBA, WLMA etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordinate GRBA schedules/calendar with other legal associations.</li> <li>▪ Host annual leadership meeting with local affiliate and specialty bars to identify joint programs and new opportunities</li> </ul>	On-going  On-going	  January		Executive Director Community Interaction Affiliate Organizations Association Staff
4. Reach out to sole practitioners and unemployed attorneys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reactivation of small firm/ solo practitioners section e.g. strong leadership, planning</li> <li>▪ Develop a Law Practice Management ad hoc committee for program planning</li> <li>▪ Establish a reduced membership rate for unemployed attorneys in Kent County</li> <li>▪ Implementation of electronic career center on new website</li> </ul>	On-going April December September  April	On-going		Executive Committee Association Staff Section Liaison(s) Membership Committee Program Committee
5. Evaluate the success of existing programs and events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formalize the process for annual evaluation of bar programs and services</li> <li>▪ Continue non/member satisfaction surveys following programs and events</li> </ul>	  On-going	February		Membership Committee Social Interaction Committee Program Committee Association Staff
6. More frequent pictorial directories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explore benefits/costs to determine viability of frequency e.g. every 3-4 years beginning 2009</li> <li>▪ Consider broadening directory participation to include non-members in Kent County</li> <li>▪ Implement pre-order process to eliminate excessive inventory and expense</li> </ul>	Sept.			Association Staff Membership Committee

**OUTCOME 2: Foster a sense of engagement, collegiality and community among lawyers in Grand Rapids.**

**STRATEGY B: Create in-person interaction opportunities socialization and professional development.**

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Foster section-sponsored events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage non-traditional times/locations for social and professional presentations</li> <li>▪ Increased section participation/attendance and provide nametags</li> <li>▪ Explore ways section events can also foster social interaction</li> <li>▪ Encourage section's compliance with section policy related to programs/activities</li> <li>▪ Coordinate with section-related items in Strategic Outcome 1</li> </ul>	Sept	On-going	On-going	Section Leadership Executive Committee Section Liaison(s) Association Staff
2. Promote cross-section activities to increase networking, socializing and educational exchanges among the profession <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify programs and/or topics that would be mutually beneficial during section chairs meetings</li> <li>▪ Identify collaborative opportunities with other organizations</li> <li>▪ Support and plan informational/formal social gatherings</li> </ul>	December	On-going	On-going	Program Committee Section Leadership Social Interaction Committee Association Staff
3. Foster an informal mentoring program or information exchange opportunities for new or young attorneys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Allow applicant to self-identify need for mentor via membership application check-off box .</li> <li>▪ Promote one free section membership for new or unemployed attorneys.</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with section chairs regarding follow-up and assignment of mentors upon request.</li> </ul>	November	On-going	On-going	Section Leadership Membership Committee Association Staff
4. Implement activities to support social interaction, community service and family gatherings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organize a group charitable event.</li> <li>▪ Organize family activities.</li> <li>▪ Encourage sections to promote more social activities such as November Fest, GRBA Movie Night – 25% off etc.</li> <li>▪ Create proposals, where appropriate, for Board consideration</li> </ul>	June	On-going	On-going	Social Interaction Committee Section Leadership Association Staff
5. Revitalize Inns of Court <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Help promote activities and membership.</li> </ul>	Sept.	On-going	On-going	Section Leadership Association Staff

**OUTCOME 2: Foster a sense of engagement, collegiality and community among lawyers in Grand Rapids.**

<b>STRATEGY C: Virtual Interaction.</b>				
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
1. Develop website capacity to allow for a message board, blogging, forums, list-serves and/or other electronic interactions to foster socializing and discuss practice issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explores options and ideas with appropriate committees</li> <li>▪ Find out ABA's most effective messaging or electronic interaction methods</li> <li>▪ Explore need for website disclaimer</li> <li>▪ Create a proposal for Board consideration</li> </ul>	April	On-going	On-going	Membership/Technology Committee Association Staff

## Critical Challenge #3: External/Public Relationships

Work Group: Mike C., Rob B., Kris V., Tom S.

### OUTCOME 3: Enhance justice initiatives and the profession

**OUTCOME BENCHMARK:** Increased opportunities for the GRBA to serve as a resource for the media and the community, evidenced by inquiries and request for services

**STRATEGY A:** Foster understanding of the law, the profession, and the justice system.

**STRATEGY B:** Support diversity and other justice related initiatives

#### STRATEGY A: Foster understanding of the law, the profession, and the justice system.

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Develop a Media Committee to serve as a clearing house to respond to media contacts and to emerging issues of interest to the organized bar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a committee comprised of members practicing in a variety of legal specialties</li> <li>▪ Develop a policy and job description to serve as a guide for the media committee activities</li> <li>▪ Committee will generate informational resources to make available to media sources</li> <li>▪ Develop an expert resource guide for use by section chairs e.g. “tips for members dealing with the media”</li> <li>▪ Add media contact information to the website</li> <li>▪ Develop a presentation, and identify opportunities to present appropriate bar resources to local media sources e.g. press club etc.</li> <li>▪ Develop a relationship with West Michigan Media sources</li> <li>▪ Initiate contacts with the media to address issues currently without accurate coverage e.g. attacks on attorneys and judges</li> </ul>		January                    February                    January March		Executive Committee Media Committee Association Staff

#### STRATEGY B: Support diversity and other justice related initiatives

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Promote justice initiatives by supporting the Diversity Committee’s efforts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adopt and oversee the implementation of a diversity strategic plan</li> <li>▪ Provide administrative support for Diversity Committee initiatives</li> </ul>	On-going	On-going	On-going	Standing Committees Ad Hoc Committees Section Leadership
2. Identify justice initiatives for which it may be appropriate for the bar to take public action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take action on justice related proposals submitted to the Board by Officers, Trustees and/or committees</li> </ul>	On-going	On-going		Executive Committee Association Staff

## Critical Challenge #4: Communications and Marketing

*Work Group: Jennifer J., Mark S., LaRissa H., Tom B.*

### OUTCOME 4: Improve communications and marketing to members and the community.

**OUTCOME BENCHMARK:** Increased member awareness and satisfaction with offerings  
 Greater visibility in the community, demonstrated by calls for GRBA cooperation, participation and input

**STRATEGY A:** Marketing to Members/Nonmembers.

**STRATEGY B:** Outreach to the community.

**STRATEGY C:** Build an effective web presence.

#### STRATEGY A: Marketing to Members/Nonmembers

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	2010	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Identify and Market the long-term economic and non-economic benefits of membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gather testimonials and experiences shared by members</li> <li>▪ Generate and organize relevant statistics/info from legal resources e.g. ABA. SBM</li> <li>▪ Identify and promote specific programs and services supporting the benefits</li> </ul>		June		Membership Committee Association Staff
2. Regular reminder of membership benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Integrate benefits reminder into newsletter production schedule, E-brief and home page of website</li> <li>▪ Explore language to promote lawyers awareness of professional responsibility e.g. "it's more than a business, it's a profession"</li> <li>▪ Identify and promote a brand which embodies the values that we believe Bar membership instills in the profession, are evident in our work, and are consistent with those values believed to be important to the community</li> </ul>		June	On-going	Membership Committee Association Staff
3. Increase communications about section activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Section marketing –include options, trial section meeting promotion, regular column for sections in the newsletter</li> <li>▪ Celebration for sections ("Best of Sections" issue of the newsletter, Section testimonials)</li> </ul>	Sept.	On-going	On-going	Membership Committee Section Leadership Association Staff
4. Convene a small group of marketing professionals to brainstorm marketing strategies, approaches and options used by firms to attract and inform attorneys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Host a luncheon and invite 4-5 marketers to brainstorm ideas</li> </ul>		June		Membership Committee



## **OUTCOME 4: Improve communications and marketing to members and the community.**

### **STRATEGY B: Outreach to the community.**

<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
1. Develop and Implement a public relations campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and implement a schedule of opportunities for public exposure e.g. articles, radio/TV spot, media releases, and PSA's</li> <li>▪ Attend legal and non-legal events and activities for networking opportunities</li> <li>▪ Submit nominations for community recognition e.g. Giants Award</li> <li>▪ Explore marketing and/or advertising opportunities e.g. billboard promotion such as "Free today," "Thank a lawyer," or "is your lawyer a member of the GRBA?"</li> </ul>			January	Membership Committee Association Staff
2. Be perceived by the public as a valuable resource that compliments the services offered by firms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify an annual charitable project or event e.g. Habitat for Humanity.</li> <li>▪ Provide "For the Public" informational resources on the website</li> <li>▪ Develop marketing packets for law Schools</li> <li>▪ Promote speaking opportunities with in the community e.g. Bill of Rights, Law Day, Constitution Day etc.</li> </ul>			January	Membership Committee Community Interaction Committee Diversity Committee

### **STRATEGY C: Build an effective web presence**

<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
3. Develop a website that effectively communicates the unique value the association offers legal professionals and the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Marketing features to include: Testimonials from members, Sign-up/registration for programs and events, fresh up-to-date content, join/membership renewal opportunities, and on-line forums</li> </ul>	November	On-going	On-going	Association Staff Membership Committee
2. Build website awareness locally and in ways that instill trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide on-line forums</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities to support /volunteer at local charities</li> <li>▪ Provide on-line feedback opportunities to continue to identify the needs of the profession</li> <li>▪ Provide easy to access legal resources</li> </ul>	November	On-going	On-going	Association Staff Membership/Technology Committee
3. Reach and interest potential members of the organized bar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Register for on-line directory</li> <li>▪ Cross-promote programs/activities with member and non-member rates</li> <li>▪ Offer exclusive on-line deals</li> <li>▪ Provide law related information</li> </ul>	December	On-going	On-going	Association Staff Membership/Technology Committee

## Critical Challenge #5: Strategic Plan Implementation

*Work Group: Executive Committee*

### OUTCOME 5: Build the board's governance capacity to implement the strategic plan

#### OUTCOME BENCHMARK:

**STRATEGY A:**

**STRATEGY B:**

#### STRATEGY A:

ACTION STEPS	2008	2009	RESPONSIBILITY	RESOURCES NEEDED
1. Working Groups meet to prioritize action items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quality over quantity!</li> <li>▪ What good, low-resource ideas can be delegated to an existing committee?</li> <li>▪ What substantial action should we implement in the next 12 months, 2 years, 3 years? Create a draft timeline</li> </ul>	January		Executive Committee	
2. Working Groups present priorities at Board of Trustees Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Board prioritizes further</li> <li>▪ Resources discussion (monetary, staff and volunteer resources. If not, can we redirect funds from other areas or do we need to seek new money?)</li> <li>▪ Delegate priorities to existing committees/sections, as appropriate, along with expectations/budget parameters.</li> <li>▪ Create follow-up working groups for remaining items.</li> </ul>	January		Executive Committee	
3. Communicate with members about the plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Board members will serve as ambassador of the</li> <li>▪ Newsletter piece about the survey/plan</li> <li>▪ Post strategic plan (or outline) on the Website</li> <li>▪ Thank you card (or e-card) for participating in the survey</li> <li>▪ Follow up mailing (or email) to nonmembers</li> <li>▪ Make assignments</li> </ul>	March		Executive Committee	

