



SLA

SASKATCHEWAN LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2019-2023

The Big Picture

Desired Future State

The Saskatchewan Library Association has had a well-developed vision and mission that have long driven strategic planning for the organization. Through the Lifecycles Assessment process, the organization participated in during 2018- 19 there was further development and articulation of the values currently guiding efforts aimed at the desired future state the vision and mission point to.

VISION:

A library and information community that is an active force in Saskatchewan's social, economic and cultural development.

MISSION:

The Mission of the Saskatchewan Library Association is to be the recognized voice of and support to Saskatchewan's library communities.

VALUES:

- **Communication:** The SLA defines communication as openness, transparency, and engagement with its stakeholders and members
- **Lifelong Learning:** Lifelong learning, a key tenet of libraries in general, this concept speaks to the fact that learning is not limited to formal education. The concept informs the programming, culture, and materials of libraries.
- **Culture, Economic and Social Opportunities:** An element of the work of SLA is to support libraries in their efforts to provide cultural, economic and social opportunities.
- **Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity:** The SLA is committed to ensuring that its programs and services meet the needs of diverse populations.
- **Reconciliation:** The SLA has committed to reconciliation with indigenous peoples, not only in response to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but also as a way of operating and engaging with its members and stakeholders in perpetuity.

ROLES:

The Saskatchewan Library Association achieves this mission by fulfilling the following roles:

- Encouraging communication and fellowship among members, library staff, and others;
- Fostering continuing education for library staff;
- Identifying and responding to issues and situations that affect library staff and libraries;

- Supporting the principles, standards, and practices that are essential to the provision of excellent library service;
- Promoting cooperation among libraries;
- Promoting the awareness of libraries as integral parts of their communities;
- Partnering with other cultural organizations in promoting the cultural development of the province;
- Partnering with other library associations to achieve common objectives.

Strategic Long-Term Vision

The Saskatchewan Library Association (SLA) is sustainable, a model for leadership within the sector, and is forward looking and dynamic. Through SLA members, partners, and stakeholders the Association informs and influences decision-makers on issues and opportunities affecting libraries.

The Saskatchewan Library Association is a credible, proactive organization that is both responsive to and representative of the needs of its members and the communities they serve. SLA's dynamic, visible, and desirable cultural programs actively engage and build relationships with partners and participants.

The Saskatchewan Library Association will continue to focus its efforts on being:

- a strong promoter of libraries and a respected and representative voice on issues affecting libraries;
- a cultural organization that offers dynamic, visible, and desirable programs and engagement opportunities to its members and their communities;
- an active force in the cultural community, and an association that builds relevant relationships throughout and beyond its sector, with stakeholders and with decision-makers, to represent the interest of libraries and the needs of their communities; and
- a sustainable, established association, with a comprehensive management plan and operational structure, and that is prepared for change.

Strategic Directions

1. Communication and Advocacy
2. Stakeholder and Member Engagement
3. Support Educational & Learning Opportunities
4. Sustainable Healthy Organization

Strategic Initiatives

Over the course of the years 2019 through 2023, SLA will seek to accomplish the following strategic objectives in moving towards the desired future state. The pace of the work to be delivered in response to the strategic plan is a function of organizational capacity. To manage capacity, the accountability for these initiatives was also assigned.

Communications and Advocacy

Objective	Initiative	Lead
Improve Communications	Develop a communications plan to broaden the communications reach of the SLA	TBD Pending Board Discussion; may be an opportunity to use reserve resources to contract for professional advice
	Assess current communications (Internal & External)	Informal review – Board & staff
	Ensure timely and thorough communication with newly hired librarians and library technicians	Communications Committee & staff
Readiness to respond to specific advocacy needs	Develop/promote a range of advocacy resources that are available as needed for all library stakeholders	Committee Staff
	Strengthen SLA's advocacy voice by enhancing relationships with government officials and other key stakeholders	Executive Staff

Stakeholder and Member Engagement

Objective	Initiative	Lead
Improve Benefits for Members	Evaluate member benefits and identify options to improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use these options as the basis for a member drive Promote current benefits Engage institutional members to promote benefits within their organizations 	Committee Staff
Improved Stakeholder Engagement	Strengthen partnerships with key members, stakeholders and interest groups through systematic communication and engagement.	Executive

Support Educational & Learning Opportunities

Objective	Initiative	Lead
Improve Evaluation and Assessment of External Needs and Programs	As a first step to building a culture of assessment, evaluate current SLA programs to ensure all programs are delivering value for the investment of dollars and effort. Assess program gaps and realign to respond to outcomes of evaluations	Program Committee Staff
Provide Inclusive Professional Development	Promote an annual progressive Library Conference that appeals to a diverse range of professions in the library community	Board Committee

Sustainable Healthy Organization

Objective	Initiative	Lead
Increase Administrative Capacity	Evaluate administration needs and develop a plan to meet the needs	Staff
Improve recruitment of board members and committees	Research volunteer motivation and develop a board and committee recruitment plan	Board
Improve Direction to Committees	Assign initiatives from the strategic plan to specific committees Where committees don't have assigned strategic initiatives, request a work plan for board approval	Board
Diversify Revenue	Research funding/revenue opportunities and develop a plan to access	Fundraising Committee Board

The Details

Background

APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Saskatchewan Library Association (SLA) has approached strategic planning as an ongoing and iterative process. The approach, adapted from the Haines Centre for Strategic Management, is designed to be incorporated as a year-round, ongoing approach to management, rather than an occurrence that takes place once every three to five years. The model begins with the end in mind and works backwards to operational strategies, processes and structures and has annual review and renewal built into it. The model is characterized in the graphic presented below. The strategic planning work led by the board addressed the steps through to “Strategies/Initiatives”, and defined

the work of Annual Planning as later work of the staff, committees, and to some extent the board itself.

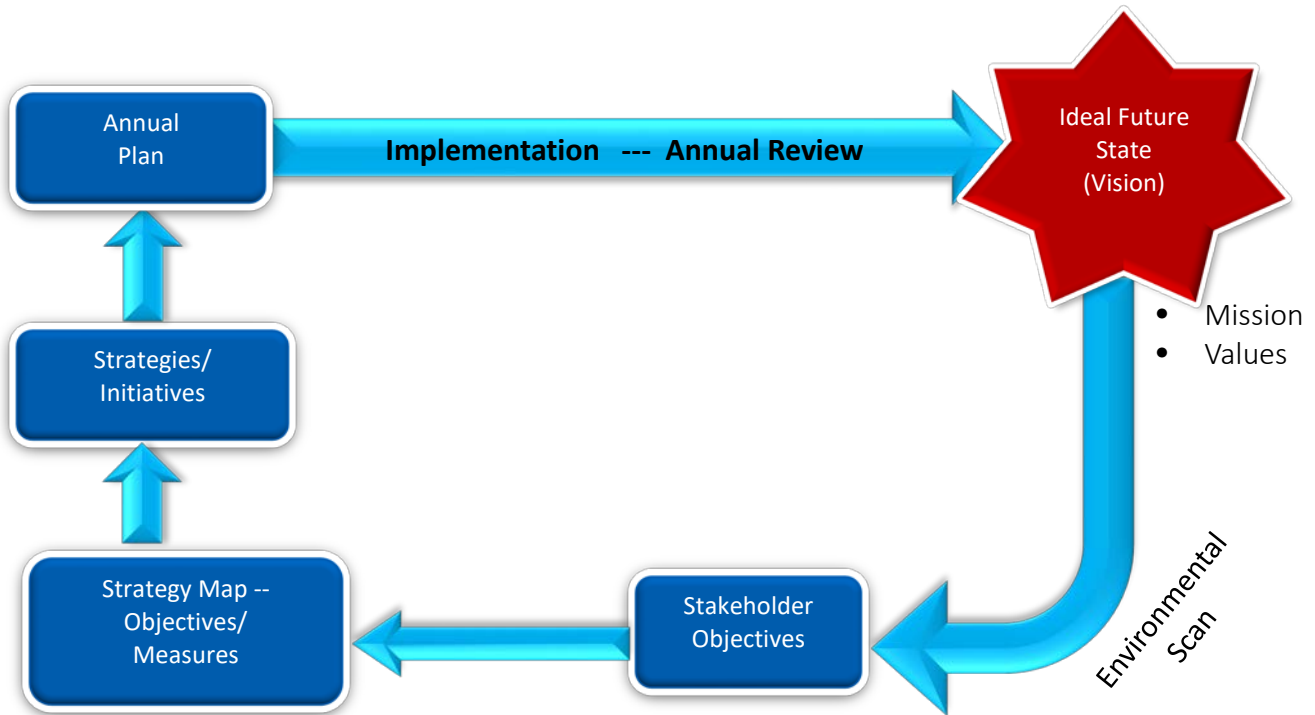


Figure 1: Strategic Management Approach, adapted from the Haines Centre for Strategic Management

The role of strategic planning was understood as the effort to identify and implement changes or improvements that would allow SLA to come closer to achieving its desired future state, which has been well-defined through past strategic planning efforts. The work of strategic planning, therefore, is to examine the organization's current state and identify priorities for change/improvement that will advance the organization to its ideal state. The process repeats itself over time to build on past developments and see the organization grow and succeed.

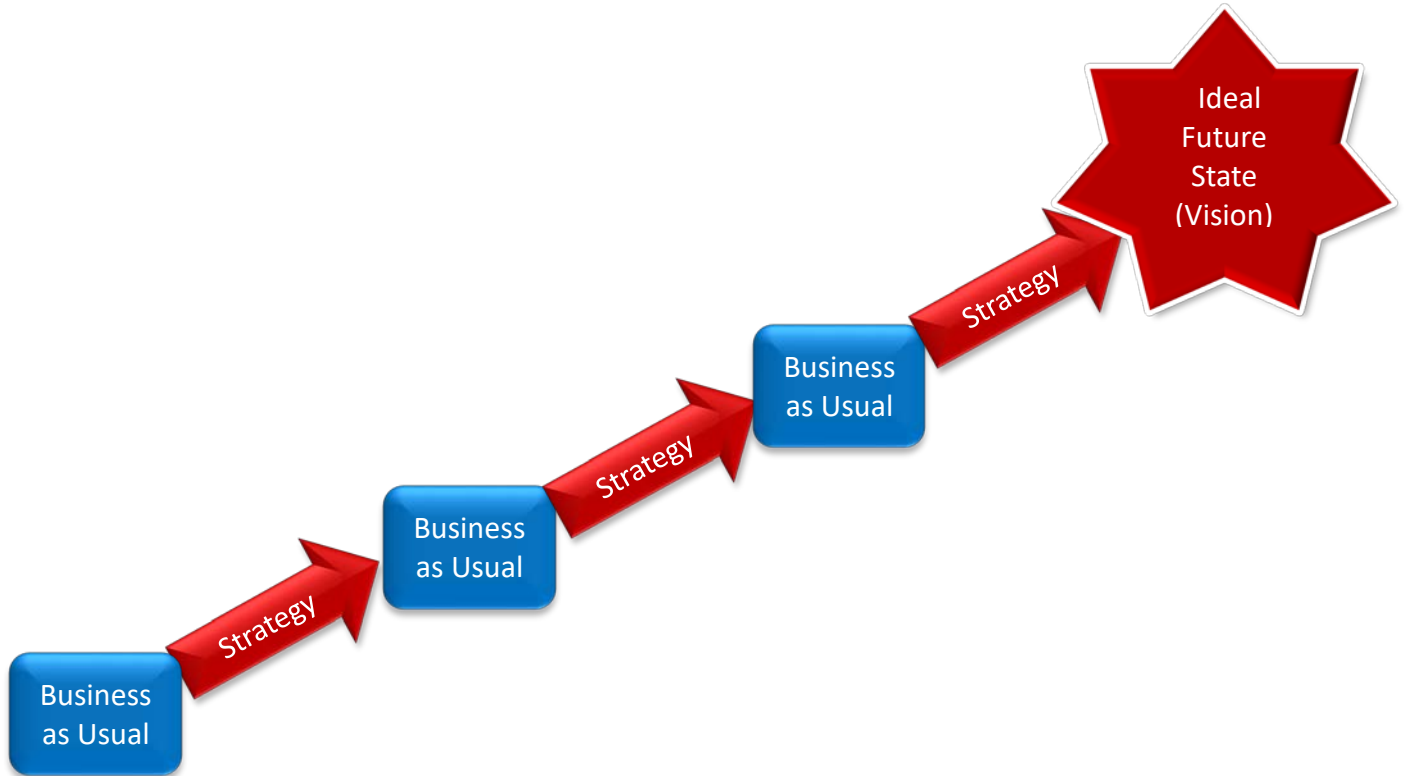


Figure 2: The role of strategic planning -- identifying and implementing the desired changes and improvements required to achieve the organization's desired future state

In support of this approach to strategic management, SLA has also used strategy mapping, drawn from Kaplan and Norton's Balanced Scorecard. This method enhances the Haines model by providing the organization with more precise tools to examine its choices and identify how it is going to measure success.

STRATEGY MAPPING

Strategy Mapping presumes that, once an organization has identified its high level objectives (the impact it desires to achieve for its members and stakeholders), it must recognize that there are three basic organizational mechanisms it can adjust to achieve the objectives – Financial (F), Internal Processes (IP), Learning and Growth (LG). The model is based on two implicit directions:

1. Intention drives down: That is, the organization must consider cause and effect relationships building down from the highest order objectives (related to members and stakeholders). The essential questions are, if we are to achieve these objectives for our members and stakeholders, what do we have to change or improve financially, in our processes and services, and in our organizational capacity?

2. Value builds up: That is, in order to achieve the higher order objectives, the organization must begin and focus its effort in the bottom half of the strategy map, assuming that the impact of this work will achieve results in higher order objectives.

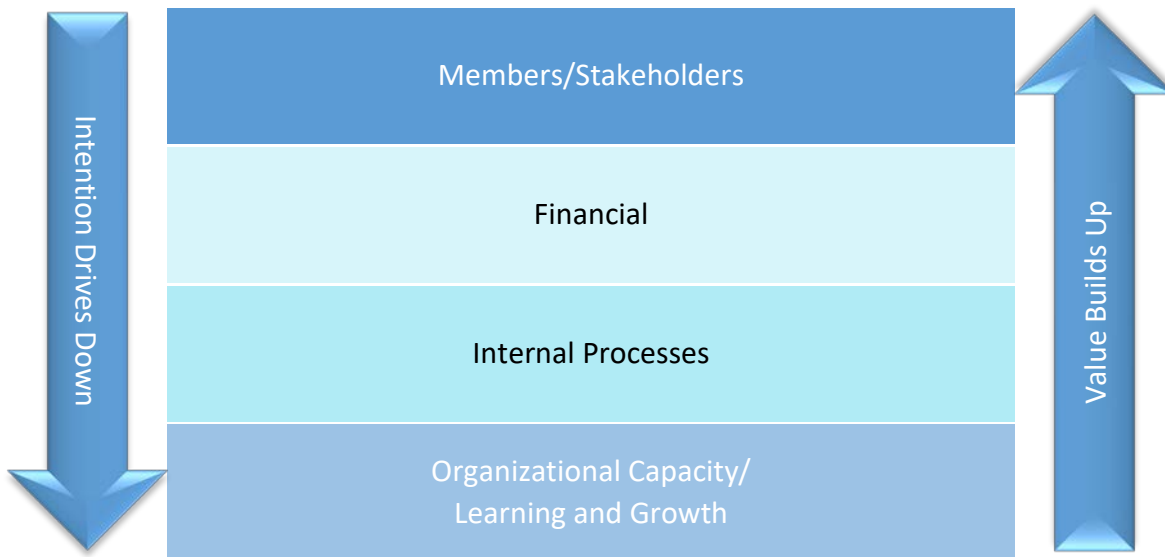


Figure 3: The framework of a strategy map in the non-profit sector, as described by Kaplan and Norton

Objectives mapped in this way are linked by one-directional arrows (always moving up the map) to show the cause and effect of the objectives and to more clearly describe intention (i.e. we have selected objective [a] because it drives improvement in or is a precedent for objective [b]).

SWOT ANALYSIS

The SLA board conducted an analysis of the organization's internal strengths and weaknesses and the external opportunities and threats they are facing. These were analysed and those items that were considered to be most important to address as part of the new strategic plan are outlined below. Inputs to the SWOT analysis included the following source information:

- Lifecycles Assessment
- Committee Review
- Executive Reports and Board Minutes
- Any Committee Reports
- Annual Report (Presidents' & Executive Directors' Reports)
- Review of the strategic plan just completed as part of this process
- General awareness of the environment within which the organization is operating

Strengths:

- Board, staff and core members are invested

Weaknesses:

- Succession planning
- Other sources of funding
- Internal human capacity
- Board/committee recruitment
- Spreading thin – taking on too many new things
- Lack of cultural diversity on board/committees

Opportunities:

- Political/Economic/Socio Pressure on libraries = opportunity for SLA to be “the VOICE”

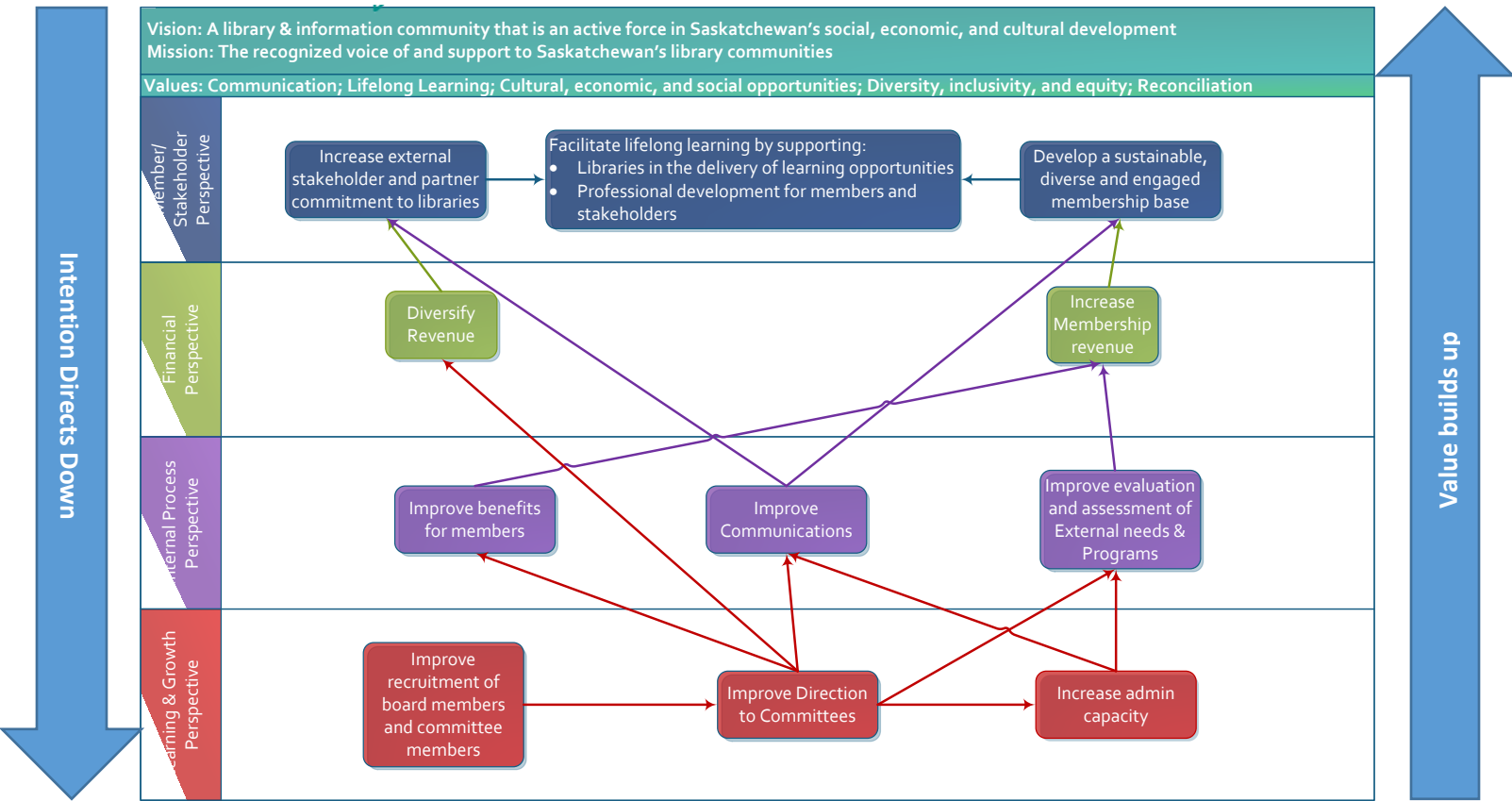
Threats:

- Government threat (to members; indirectly the SLA)
- Loss of member engagement, specifically large Saskatchewan organizations
- Difficulty recruiting board and committee members
- Public perception of libraries – proving value

Member/Stakeholder Objectives

The board considered the current state of SLA and developed three stakeholder objectives. The process involved the individual development of objectives which were then themed. These themes were then labeled and objectives were developed representing each theme. The results of this work were:

- Increase external stakeholder and partner commitment to libraries
- Develop a sustainable, diverse and engaged membership base
- Facilitate lifelong learning by supporting
- Libraries in the delivery of learning opportunities
- Professional development for members and stakeholders



In the methodology used by the SLA, the intended direction flows down the strategy map, but the value builds up. The first and greatest effort therefore, is placed on the objectives in the bottom half of the plan, assuming that the impact of these efforts will drive the results in higher order perspectives.

As a supplement to this plan, continued work will be undertaken to identify performance measures and targets to further clarify the work and the pace at which the work must occur.