

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF SASKATCHEWAN



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MEETING CHALLENGES, OPTIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Priorities & Objectives 2016 -2018

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business centre for
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I. MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL ARCHIVIST

As Provincial Archivist, I am pleased to present **MEETING CHALLENGES, OPTIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES**, a strategic plan designed for the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan for the years 2016-2018. In reviewing past goals and achievements, focusing on current challenges and opportunities and anticipating the internal and external environments that contribute to objectives and directions for the years ahead, we have committed as an institution to defining a way forward. Our path upholds the renewed vision and mission of the province's archive, the values that compel our actions and the mandate enshrined in *The Archives and Public Records Management Act*.

Supported by our new legislation which clarifies our purpose, governs our activities and gives voice to our new identity, the Provincial Archives prepares to focus on four key strategic priorities over the next three years: Building our Brand Within Government; Developing Partnerships and Prioritizing Opportunities; Investing in Programs, Practices and People; and Building Sustainable Infrastructure and Facilities.

The dedication and expertise of our staff is this institution's greatest strength, providing action to its objectives and the momentum required to achieve success. The effective delivery of services to all client groups, public and private, dictates that human resources are sufficient, trained and deployed in a manner that meets the expectations and opportunities encountered, through a realistic and professional response. Identifying strategic priorities and determining collective action sets the course for our future.

Linda McIntyre
Provincial Archivist
April 2016

II. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

i. BACKGROUND

The Provincial Archives celebrated its 70th year in 2015 and the past five years have borne witness to many achievements. Our staff has worked diligently to increase awareness of our services and archival holdings. New educational packages for teachers and students have been developed, and special exhibits and video series have been designed and released. In 2015 we unveiled a new name, the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. This name change marks the beginning of a new era for the organization and this strategic plan is the building block from which that era unfolds.

MEETING CHALLENGES, OPTIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES 2016 – 2018 builds upon past strategic efforts. The 2011-2016 strategic plan, “*Rooted in our Past, Renewal for our Future*”, highlighted six strategic goals including: Accommodations, Revenue Strategy, Digital Records Program, Managing the Permanent Collection, Electronic Service Delivery, and Processes. Annual reports and reviews of annual achievements document the considerable progress that has been made on all strategic goals as outlined in the 2011-2016 strategic plan.

The strategic plan for 2016 – 2018 outlines revised vision and mission statements, as well as the values that drive the Provincial Archives’ decision-making. Four strategic priorities are identified and the plan provides an overview of each of these priorities, as well as objectives and supportive actions. The plan also details how we have begun a process of identifying appropriate measures and targets for evaluating the implementation of the plan over the next three years.

ii. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In January 2016 we began a planning process intended to determine strategic priorities for the three-year period 2016 – 2018. The Centre for Management Development at the University of Regina was commissioned to lead the strategic planning process.

Facilitated by Dr. Gina Grandy, consultant with the Centre for Management Development, the strategic planning process involved a number of steps. A pre-workshop survey developed by the consultant was administered to members of the management team to assess relevant internal and external environmental considerations. Following the completion of the survey and analysis of the findings, a two-day strategic planning workshop, facilitated by the consultant, was held with the management team. During these two intensive days the management team revisited the Provincial Archives’ vision, mission and values; assessed and identified key resources, challenges and opportunities; and, determined strategic priorities. A draft strategic plan was prepared by the consultant, reviewed by management, and reviewed and subsequently approved by the Provincial Archives’ Board of Directors.

iii. CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

In building upon the successes of the past strategic plan, the strategic priorities outlined for 2016 – 2018 acknowledge and respond to current and anticipated challenges in the external and internal environments. The strategic priorities are also designed to capitalize on key opportunities.

Economic Conditions. Not unlike other organizations, challenging economic conditions strain current and future revenue streams including those from government, clients and donors. This places mounting pressure on the Provincial Archives to actively promote its value proposition to various stakeholders, to innovate how it utilizes resources and activities such as space and service delivery (e.g., reference services), and to seek additional sources of revenue.

Increasing Competition for Funds. Alongside the complications that come with challenging economic and fiscal conditions, the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan is one of many cultural and heritage organizations vying for government and public support. This emphasizes the importance of unique positioning relative to, and in collaboration with, other cultural and heritage organizations.

Government Digital Records Strategies and Infrastructure. The Provincial Archives' mandate outlines its responsibility to facilitate the management of government records. Legal obligations, combined with the public's demand for increased transparency and accountability from all areas of government, elevate the need for the Provincial Archives' expertise in records management. This, however, is only possible if digital records are managed by government institutions using a combination of dedicated software, policies and procedures and if the Provincial Archives is viewed as a key consultant from the outset of this process.

Government & Legislative Changes. While the Provincial Archives is positioned at arms-length from government and governed by its own Act, its activities are in many ways inter-dependent with government. The complex nature of this relationship makes the Provincial Archives vulnerable to many factors beyond its control. The Archives must adapt its operations to changes in wider legislation e.g., possible forthcoming changes to the Freedom of Information Act may impact the Archives. The Provincial Archives does not have direct access to internal government communications, and as a result knowledge of expected changes in government policies and legislation is often delayed. Direct and indirect influences on the Provincial Archives' decision-making processes challenge the organization to maintain its focus and achievement of strategic priorities. Periodic changes to ministerial reports and ministry support result in the continued need to devote resources to educating and re-educating stakeholders about the purpose and value of the Archives.

Digital Preservation and Infrastructure. Despite modest investments in digital preservation, the Provincial Archives lacks the infrastructure to build sustainable digital platforms and systems. If the Archives is to remain relevant in the future it must achieve the capability to acquire, manage, preserve and make accessible archival records in digital format.

Identifying, Responding to and Generating New Demand for Services. The public's expectations for comprehensive access to archival resources challenges the Archives to develop and implement effective strategies to target diverse and younger groups. Identifying and responding to the needs of stakeholder groups (e.g., First Nations groups, New Canadians, francophone groups) present opportunities to acquire additional infrastructure and staff resources. Moving forward and taking

advantage of these opportunities require careful considerations in resource allocation so that the Provincial Archives' commitment to excellence in the delivery of core activities is maintained, while the potential of new opportunities are assessed.

Insufficient and Substandard Facilities Threaten Records Preservation & Limit Organizational Efficiency. The Provincial Archives' service delivery and storage is presently accommodated in five different locations across two cities. Without dedicated and appropriate storage there is a continued risk of damage to and loss of the documentary heritage of Saskatchewan. The lack of a unified physical office space for Provincial Archives' staff results in inefficiencies and a disconnect between units.

Staffing and Development. Staff is committed, knowledgeable and adept at problem solving. To enhance the profile of the Provincial Archives and illustrate the broad scope of services that it offers the public and government clients, dedicated resources are needed in outreach and communications. A transition from hiring term staff to increasing the complement of full-time staff will permit the development of new programs and services and reduce the threat of knowledge loss that accompanies natural attrition. There is a need for ongoing internal professional development opportunities and enhanced communication efforts between both management and staff. Such efforts will contribute to building the sustainability of the organization.

III. WHO WE ARE: VISION, MISSION, VALUES & MANDATE

VISION

To be recognized as a leading authority as we actively preserve our documentary heritage and promote the management of government records.

MISSION

To acquire, preserve, and make accessible, through public and private engagement, the documentary heritage of Saskatchewan, and to ensure government information is managed efficiently and effectively in compliance with legal standards.

VALUES

Transparency & Accountability. As a guardian of Saskatchewan's documentary heritage, we are responsible to the people of Saskatchewan and our patrons, past, present and future. We foster government accountability and transparency through responsible records management. We are fiscally responsible and strive to maintain trust with stakeholders through open and transparent communication.

Accessibility, Integrity & Respect for Privacy. We are committed to providing equitable access to public information. The rights and responsibilities of a democratic society are the foundations of our work. Our staff maintains high ethical standards in the management of private and public records.

Innovation & Collaboration. We strive to develop new ways to preserve and share the documentary heritage of Saskatchewan with and among our diverse stakeholders. We are committed to sharing our expertise with partners and are eager to collaborate with individuals, groups and organizations that advance the promotion, knowledge and preservation of Saskatchewan's documentary heritage.

Professionalism & Service Excellence. Our staff is highly skilled and dedicated to sharing their expertise in archival knowledge and related activities in a professional manner. We strive for service excellence in all of our activities as it relates to the preservation and management of Saskatchewan's documentary heritage.

MANDATE

As stated in *The Archives and Public Records Management Act*, the objects and functions of the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan are the following:

- (a) to acquire and preserve public records and private records of significance to Saskatchewan and to facilitate access to those records;
- (b) to be the permanent repository of public records;
- (c) to ensure that public records are managed, kept and preserved in a usable format;
- (d) to promote and facilitate good records management respecting public records in order to support accountability, transparency and effective operations; and,
- (e) to encourage and support archival activities and the archival community.

IV. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2016 – 2018

For the period 2016 - 2018 the strategic direction of the Provincial Archives is guided by four overarching objectives including:

- **TO INCREASE AWARENESS AND AN APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE OF OUR DIVERSE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR CURRENT AND NEW CLIENTS;**
- **TO BETTER ALIGN OPERATIONAL DECISIONS AND STRATEGIC INTENTIONS;**
- **TO INCREASE SOURCES OF FUNDING, IN-KIND AND FINANCIAL, WHICH SUPPORT OUR SHORT-TERM NEEDS AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY; and,**
- **TO ENHANCE SERVICE EXCELLENCE IN ALL THAT WE DO.**

Four strategic priorities were identified and each is discussed in detail, as well as objectives and supportive actions. The strategic priorities are inter-connected and direct attention to both internal and external stakeholders. The supportive actions aligned with each strategic priority are meant to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive. The plan will be cascaded down the organization so that actions, measures and targets are defined and operationalized for each unit of the Provincial Archives.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF SASKATCHEWAN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2016 – 2018	
SP1. BUILDING OUR BRAND WITHIN GOVERNMENT	SP2. DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS & PRIORITIZING OPPORTUNITIES
SP3. INVESTING IN PROGRAMS, PRACTICES & PEOPLE	SP4. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES

SP1. BUILDING OUR BRAND WITHIN GOVERNMENT

The strategic priority, *Building Our Brand Within Government*, addresses the undervalued role that the Provincial Archives holds among various government bodies and clients. There is an inter-dependent relationship between the Provincial Archives and the Province of Saskatchewan. This relationship, however, has not matured into a partnership model and as a result, the available services and potential value of the Provincial Archives are not fully recognized and engaged. This strategic priority demonstrates our commitment to leveraging our records management expertise to enable government clients to effectively manage government information in compliance with legal standards. This strategic priority recognizes a need to alter the perception of the Provincial Archives as a warehouse for government records to one of a proactive partner: magnifying the possible uses of the Permanent Collection; offering cost saving alternatives for documentary heritage preservation; and, serving as an expert in archival and records management services.

OBJECTIVES

1. To increase the value placed on the Provincial Archives among government and government clients.
2. To better align and integrate the Provincial Archives' services with government and government clients' needs.
3. To enhance recognition of the need for the Provincial Archives' records management and archival services.
4. To develop a more substantial presence among government decision-making bodies.

SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

- Increase frequency of quality communications between Provincial Archives' leaders and key government decision-making persons / bodies.
- Continue the promotion of records management best practices in government that result in effective business operations, reduced risk, cost savings and legislative compliance.
- Develop digital records strategies for management of government digital records.
- Develop and deliver information sessions for targeted government clients.
- Continue to promote possible uses of the Permanent Collection in government decision-making, projects and related activities.
- Secure funding to develop and implement a communications plan.

SP2. DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS & PRIORITIZING OPPORTUNITIES

The strategic priority *Developing Partnerships & Prioritizing Opportunities* recognizes the need to understand and respond to, in a sustainable way, the constantly evolving expectations of current and potential clients. We must achieve a balance between engaging new opportunities and sustaining core activities - strategic partnerships are a means through which to achieve this. This priority involves directing attention and resources towards the identification, assessment and development of *strategic* partnerships. Commitment to the strategic priority *Developing Partnerships & Prioritizing Opportunities* will: ensure a diverse range of stakeholder needs are met; foster collaboration with other cultural and heritage organizations; and, enhance the reputation of the Provincial Archives as a leading authority in records management.

OBJECTIVES

1. To enhance relationships and services with francophone groups, church communities and other stakeholder groups.
2. To better understand the needs of Métis and First Nations groups in order to facilitate collaboration and liaison
3. To manage partnerships in a way that results in a balanced workflow and alignment with strategic priorities.

SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

- Develop and implement a partnership assessment framework that identifies the Provincial Archives' needs and resources available for partnership sharing, and assesses the strategic and operational fit and impact of current and new partnerships.
- Regularly review current and potential partnerships for fit.
- Develop a brochure and prominent website placement which encourages support (financial or in-kind) along with the acquisition and processing of private records.
- Secure funding for, and access to a francophone archivist through partnerships with Fransaskoise organizations within the province.
- Explore fee for service/space partnerships.
- Identify existing resources that align with interests of First Nations groups (e.g., survey of holdings on residential schools).
- Collaborate with the Saskatchewan Council of Archives and Archivists and other groups to provide training opportunities for staff working with First Nations groups.
- Identify the needs of, and explore partnerships with First Nations groups.
- Identify potential partners for enhancing the delivery of on-line records management training for government clients.

SP3. INVESTING IN PROGRAMS, PRACTICES & PEOPLE

Investing in Programs, Practices & People is a strategic priority that recognizes the need for continuous improvement in our internal operations. Aligning program activities with strategic priorities, improvement of inter-unit and unit-management communications, identification of areas vulnerable to loss of institutional and expert knowledge, and increased opportunities for staff development will result in greater employee commitment and service enhancement.

OBJECTIVES

1. To balance strategic and program priorities and achieve realistic workloads through inter-unit cooperation, collaboration and transparent decision-making.
2. To enhance client-based service delivery.
3. To increase staff engagement and professional development opportunities.

SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

- Develop and implement a program and initiative review process to ensure an ongoing balanced fit between strategic priorities and operational capabilities.
- Assess the business case for a Provincial Archives online retail store.
- Identify best practices in on-line records management training suitable for government clients.
- Continue with the implementation of the Education Services Project.
- Continue with the development of the Enquiry Management System (EMS) audit.
- Review and streamline overlapping processes across units.
- Increase integration of staff input in planning and increase opportunities for units to periodically communicate directly to the Management Committee.
- Implement regularly scheduled inter-unit meetings to identify opportunities for collaboration and to generate ideas for client service enhancement.
- Reassess Information Management service delivery to ensure that needs of clients are addressed through schedule development.
- Identify and communicate required skills and abilities, and associated processes for employee promotion.
- Develop internal knowledge-sharing training opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for more institutional-based training.

SP4. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES

The strategic priority *Building Sustainable Infrastructure & Facilities* acknowledges our on-going challenge of securing and maintaining appropriate digital and analogue archival storage. Taking into account the constraints imposed by the available current storage and space, *Building Sustainable Infrastructure & Facilities* involves a commitment to optimizing physical space for staff, securing standards-based storage for digital and analogue archives, and improving service delivery for digital records. This priority also involves continued advancement of long-term planning that works towards more sustainable physical infrastructure and digital capabilities.

OBJECTIVES

1. To implement more effective and integrated service delivery to stakeholders.
2. To pursue ‘standards based’ storage environment for digital and analogue records.
3. To improve and amalgamate physical working space for staff.
4. To streamline operations across different locations.

SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

- Invest in additional staff training and web search improvements to enhance service delivery until transition to new archival software system.
- Investigate and evaluate available archival hardware and software options, build business case for need, secure funding and initiate tender process.
- Continue to develop best practices and standards for digital archives.
- Prioritize storage and renovation needs (e.g., Henderson storage / space deficiencies; fire suppression in server room; freezers & other equipment identified by the Canadian Conservation Institute).
- Continue to generate awareness about staff and storage infrastructure needs among government & Board stakeholders.
- Facilitate and manage government decisions on Saskatoon office.

V. NEXT STEPS

Developing a communications plan for sharing the outlined strategic priorities with internal and external stakeholders is the next step in the implementation of this plan. We have begun a process of defining and developing appropriate measures and targets at the organizational level to accompany the implementation of the strategic priorities outlined in this plan. These measures, targets and identified areas of responsibility for the implementation of actions and monitoring of success will serve as a tool for future annual reporting to internal and external stakeholders. Upon completing the process of defining and developing measures and targets and identifying lines of responsibility at the organizational level, the plan will be cascaded down the organization so that actions, measures and targets are defined and operationalized for each unit of the Provincial Archives.

