

Policy Name	BOARD POLICIES – OLA Strategic Plan Process
Policy Type	GOVERNANCE
Policy Number	G6.7
Date Approved	November 29, 2019
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1. Policy Statement:

The Ontario Library Association will establish an ongoing strategic planning process by which it translates its mission and values into actionable and measurable goals, strategies, initiatives, and programs. The plan will provide direction for both long and short-term decision-making by the Board of Directors and Senior Leadership to fulfill the mission of the organization. Annual planning of the board, divisions and committees will be aligned with the Strategic Plan. The annual budget factors in the priorities of the strategic plan.

The OLA Strategic Plan is approved by and is the responsibility of the OLA Board. Specifically, board members are:

- Responsible for Establishing and reviewing the Association’s mission, vision and monitoring of the progress towards the goals of the Strategic Plan.
- Accountable for the OLA’s performance in relation to its mission and strategic goals, and for the effective stewardship of financial and human resources.

The executive director is delegated the authority to make decisions, implement and manage all operational practices and activities which are within the scope of the Board’s mission, vision, policies, budgets, strategic plan and subject to the Executive Director Responsibilities policy.

2. Definitions:

- **Strategic priorities** are the focus for the association over the next four years.
- **Goals** are the desired outcomes for each strategic priority.
- **Tactics** are the means by which each goal will be accomplished.

3. Strategic Planning Process Framework:

Duration of the Strategic Plan: Four-years

External Facilitation: The strategic planning process will be guided by an external strategic planning facilitator. To secure this facilitator, the board will approve the request for proposal document, a budget, and timeline.



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The strategic planning process will include active engagement in the process at all levels of the organization.

The OLA Board will strike a Strategic Plan advisory committee comprised of the OLA Executive, Executive Director and Director, Operations to guide the process.

Consultation to inform the Strategic Plan will include input from:

- Membership
- OLA board and divisional councils
- Partners and stakeholder leaders
- OLA staff

Input may be gathered in a variety of ways:

- Town halls (in person or virtually)
- Surveys
- Individual or small group interviews

Supporting information may include:

- Strategic analysis (i.e. SWOT, PEST)
- Industry reports and benchmarks
- OLA Annual Reports

The strategic plan will include the following

- Mission, values and vision statements
- Environmental factors assessment
- Critical assumptions about the future
- Measurement indicators
- Written, plan that includes:
 - Long-term vision statement (3 – 5 years)
 - Guiding principles
 - Major priorities and goals for the next four years (3 – 5 priorities)
 - Annual tactics (developed annually)
 - Strategic performance measurement report format (sample attached)

4. Work cycle

The OLA fiscal year is September 1 – August 31. To align with the fiscal planning of the association, the following is the timeline for developing the strategic plan;

Development of a new strategic plan:

- September of the fourth year of the 4-year strategic plan: OLA board approves the process for the next strategic plan process including budget and timeline.
- February: OLA Board approves the facilitator and workplan for the strategic planning process.
- February – June: consultation, data gathering, and first draft of the new strategic plan.
- June: OLA Board approves the new strategic plan
- September: OLA staff present the year one (September – August) workplan (high level tactics).

Annual planning:

Every year, the organization will adopt annual performance goals and make adjustments to the plan based on changing conditions. It is expected that staff are able to accomplish the majority of tactics on schedule. However, with a small staff team, it is anticipated that some modifications to deadlines will occur.

- September: OLA staff present the annual workplan (high level goals and tactics).
- Quarterly board meeting: staff provide a report on progress of the strategic plan annual goals and tactics.

5. Role of the Board

The Board of Directors will play an active role in the strategic planning process while ensuring it does not usurp management's responsibilities. The board will:

1. Adopt a policy committing the organization to a mission-driven strategic planning process that includes broad inclusion of organizational leadership to create and carry out the plan
2. Adopt a compelling vision statement for the organization
3. Formally approve strategic plan
4. Adopt an annual plan for board and committee work that focuses on strategic priorities of the organization, and be advised by the Strategic Planning Committee
5. Allot time on every board meeting agenda for discussion of strategic-level issues. Focus on the critical strategic issues facing the association and avoid routine operational matters
6. Monitor progress toward achieving strategic goals and require corrective actions and adjustments as necessary to changing conditions
7. Avail itself of education and information to stay abreast of community and environmental trends
8. Raise questions and contribute expertise
9. Bring insights from and help communicate the plan to key stakeholders.

6. Role of Senior Staff Team

1. Engage the board to fully utilize its experience, expertise and knowledge of community and stakeholder needs
2. Bring objective analysis and recommendations to the board for deliberation and decision making
3. Structure presentations to the board on strategic topics to allow sufficient time for questions and board feedback/guidance
4. Provide education on industry trends, opportunities and challenges
5. Review progress on implementation of the strategic plan regularly. Provide to the board a concise, dashboard-style Strategic Performance Measurement Report showing progress toward the key goals and measures in the strategic plan.