



2019-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Thank you for your interest in our work! On behalf of The Friends' staff and board of directors, we are excited to share our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan with you. This document represents 11 months of engagement, field research, staff and board inputs, and inspiring conversations across our communities. We are thrilled to share with you a framework that highlights the distinct intersections between *what* we do (our strategic imperatives) and *why* we do it (our values and beliefs). We hope that you will find your own role and inspiration through this plan, and help us achieve our ultimate aspiration for a dynamic library at the heart of every community.

Beth Burns
Beth Burns
President

Heather Anfang
Heather Anfang
Board of Directors | Strategic Planning Chair

Our Key Stakeholders

- Saint Paul Public Library Staff
- Individual Donors
- City of Saint Paul Leadership
- Private Foundations
- Corporate and Business Community
- Literary Arts Community
- National Community of Libraries





The Planning Process

In early 2018, one year after its first-ever executive transition and with critical financial benchmarks met, the board and staff of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library embarked on a new strategic planning process.

The Friends partnered with consulting firm Wiser Wolf, who guided us through an immersive and comprehensive strategic planning process. Keys to our successful outcome were the collaborative nature of the process and the high level of involvement and guidance from The Friends board of trustees from start to finish.

To kick things off, we convened board and staff for an all-day retreat. Presentations from Mayor Melvin Carter III and Library Director Catherine Penkert contextualized The Friends' work on behalf of a city that works for everyone and a library system grounded in equity and learning. Vigorous conversations led to the identification of seven key stakeholder groups and areas of focus for our values and goals. We then turned our focus to those external stakeholders to better understand their relationship and intersection with The Friends. From one-on-one interviews to focus groups to surveys, we spent much of the initial phase listening.

To incorporate the rich feedback we received and create meaningful organizational goals, we examined the intersection between our newly-articulated values and our five strategic imperatives. For The Friends, this was a way to align our work with what matters most to us. The result is a measurable plan that reflects our central beliefs, activates our mission, and deepens relationships with our core stakeholders.



The Insights

Our **public-private partnership** is working: Private contributions from loyal and generous donors across our community empower The Friends to leverage maximum public investment from the City of Saint Paul.

Our business model creates a **virtuous cycle**: Our core work is in and for Saint Paul. When we share our expertise statewide and nationally, we benefit from best-practices we learn in the broader field. We increase our visibility and reputation, which opens doors of support and opportunity that create an even greater impact locally.

We will continue to work statewide as the **Minnesota Center for the Book** and consult nationally through **Library Strategies**, as our research shows that this work supports our virtuous cycle that distinguishes The Friends among library support organizations.

By integrating this unique portfolio of **programs and services** and focusing on writers, readers, and libraries, we have the potential for even greater impact and maximum benefit to these core constituencies locally and nationally.

Our Mission

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library acts as a catalyst for libraries to strengthen and inspire their communities.

Our Vision

A dynamic library at the heart of every community

Our Values

We believe in **CONNECTING**.

We believe in **LIBRARIES**.

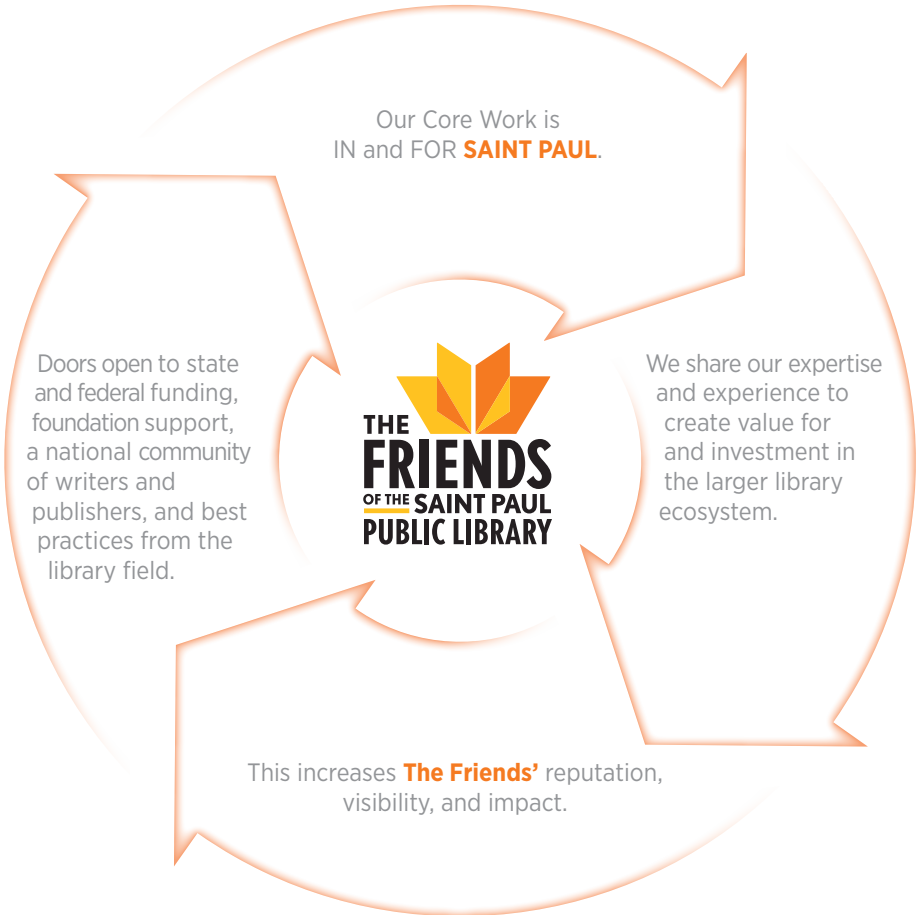
We believe in **EVERYONE**.

We believe in **POTENTIAL**.

We believe in **LEARNING**.



Our Business Model: A Virtuous Cycle



2019-2022 Strategic Plan

<div>STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES</div> <div>(what we do)</div> <div>VALUES</div> <div>(Why we do it)</div>	<div>RESILIENCE</div> <div>We are grounded in best practices.</div> <div>We are committed to building our cultural competencies, remaining sustainable through changing times, and innovating and leading in our field.</div>	<div>PRIVATE FUNDING</div> <div>We develop and deepen relationships through mission-focused, data-driven engagement strategies.</div> <div>We achieve our fundraising goals by creating many and meaningful pathways to The Friends.</div>	<div>PUBLIC ADVOCACY</div> <div>We give voice to people’s love for, and belief in, the public library.</div> <div>We do this to achieve maximum public investment in its programs, services, infrastructure, and capital.</div>	<div>COMMUNICATIONS</div> <div>We cultivate a network of people who believe in libraries and see The Friends as an essential ally to libraries’ success.</div> <div>We connect people with The Friends through storytelling and celebration of libraries.</div>	<div>PROGRAMS & SERVICES</div> <div>We champion libraries, writers, and readers.</div> <div>We offer responsive programs and services that strengthen our work in Saint Paul, statewide, and throughout the national library ecosystem.</div>
<div>We believe in CONNECTING.</div>	Create pathways to expertise for 100% of staff through participation in local and national professional organizations and networks.	Implement a systems-driven approach to create engagement pathways and opportunities to broaden the donor base.	Achieve representation of the diverse voices of Saint Paul’s seven wards on the Advocacy Committee.	Increase positive awareness in Saint Paul through promotion of The Friends, its events, and services.	Create and deliver programs and services grounded in expertise and intentionally welcoming hospitality.
<div>We believe in LIBRARIES.</div>	Increase the unrestricted commitment to SPPL to \$150,000 by 2022. Achieve 100% giving by The Friends Board of Directors every year.	Feature a cohesive Friends presence at all SPPL branches that informs, inspires, and activates library patrons as Friends donors.	Create understanding of, and value for, the work of SPPL in order to achieve maximum possible investment through The Mayor and City Council’s annual budget process.	Build positive awareness and goodwill for the work of The Friends with 100% of library staff. Jointly plan and execute marketing and communications programs for major SPPL and Friends initiatives.	Own a clear and dynamic portfolio of programs and services that is responsive to the needs of libraries, writers, and readers by 2022.
<div>We believe in EVERYONE.</div>	Develop the inter-cultural competencies of staff and board.	Diversify the donor base by embracing the values of the Library and its users.	Prioritize public investment in programs and services that benefit historically marginalized or underserved communities in The Friends’ annual Advocacy Platform.	Audit and update The Friends’ communications program to ensure that the messages and channels are aligned to reach our desired target audiences, and represent Saint Paul’s diverse communities.	Provide opportunities for people to experience and participate in Friends programs and services by mitigating financial, geographic, and cultural barriers.
<div>We believe in POTENTIAL.</div>	Strengthen Friends’ business operations through continuous improvement by achieving recognized nonprofit sector best practices in accordance with the MN Charities Review Council standards.	Grow the overall number of donors by 12% by 2020 and 20% total by 2022. Increase the total dollar amount of gifts received by 15% by 2020 and 25% by 2022.	Secure stable long-term funding for The Friends’ work as Minnesota’s Center for the Book by 2021. Advocate at the state level for maximum public investment in the statewide library system.	Strengthen The Friends’ reputation as an outstanding nonprofit library support organization with local and national stakeholders.	Deliver net profitability for all programs and services by 2022.
<div>We believe in LEARNING.</div>	Spend 10% of staff worktime in areas of innovation. Achieve a dedicated Innovation Fund equal to 1% of the general operating budget by 2020.	Adopt signature practices in data usage, donor modeling, and fundraising processes.	Learn and adapt processes to leverage maximum public investment for SPPL facility renovations and expansions.	Create cohesive marketing tools that staff can use to achieve maximum efficiency to support our constellation of brands.	Conduct ongoing analyses to determine best paths of development for all programs and services.



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thefriends.org/donate