

SASKATCHEWAN WOODWORKERS' GUILD



EST. 1978

Strategic Action Plan 2026-2031

Prepared by:



Executive Summary

The Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild Strategic Action Plan provides a shared direction to guide the Guild's growth, sustainability, and community impact over the coming years. Developed through conversations with members, Executive leadership, and partners throughout 2025, the plan builds on the Guild's strong foundation of craftsmanship, mentorship, and volunteer leadership while identifying opportunities to strengthen participation, expand community connections, and support long-term organizational resilience.

Rooted in its mission to cultivate a thriving and inclusive community of woodworkers across Saskatchewan, the Guild exists to share skills, foster creativity, and promote the craft through education, mentorship, and meaningful connection.

Looking ahead, members share a vision of a *vibrant, intergenerational network of makers by 2031 - one where knowledge, creativity, and craftsmanship are actively shared, membership continues to grow, and the Guild serves as a welcoming hub for learning and collaboration across the province.*

Engagement throughout the planning process highlighted a desire to build on the Guild's strengths in knowledge-sharing, hands-on learning, and community. Members emphasized increasing visibility, welcoming new participants, strengthening leadership, and creating sustainable structures to support continued growth.

To support this vision, the Strategic Action Plan is organized around eight interconnected pathways that translate shared priorities into practical and achievable actions:

- **Community Engagement & Visibility:** increasing awareness of the Guild through outreach, storytelling, and accessible entry points into woodworking.
- **Partnerships & Collaboration:** strengthening relationships with community organizations, businesses, and allied maker groups.
- **Membership & Mentorship:** fostering connection, learning, and intergenerational knowledge-sharing among members.
- **Governance & Leadership:** supporting clear roles, succession planning, and sustainable volunteer leadership.
- **Programming & Space:** enhancing learning opportunities and improving spaces that support creativity and collaboration.
- **Creative & Sustainable Funding:** developing modest, sustainable revenue approaches aligned with the Guild's values.
- **Digital Presence:** improving communication tools and expanding access to Guild knowledge and activities
- **Volunteer Leadership & Involvement:** creating meaningful pathways for members to contribute and share responsibility for the Guild's future.

At its core, this plan reaffirms the Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild's commitment to community, creativity, and shared learning. By strengthening its internal foundations while expanding its presence and partnerships, the Guild is well positioned to grow its membership, deepen connections across Saskatchewan, and ensure woodworking continues to thrive as a visible, inclusive, and enduring craft for generations to come.

Recognition & Commitment

The Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild operates in, and welcomes members from, communities across Saskatchewan. We acknowledge that we gather and work on the traditional territories covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8, and within the homeland of the Métis. We recognize and honour the histories, languages, cultures, and enduring presence of First Nations and Métis peoples, whose relationships with the land continue to shape this province.

As a community rooted in creativity, learning, and the sharing of knowledge, the Guild recognizes that craftsmanship and making have long been part of Indigenous cultures and traditions. We are committed to fostering respect, curiosity, and understanding through our activities and relationships, and to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds feel encouraged to participate and share their skills and stories.

Through this Strategic Action Plan and our ongoing work, the Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild strives to build community in ways that reflect respect, collaboration, and learning across generations - honouring the past while contributing positively to the communities we serve today and into the future.



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1. Introduction

Who is the Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild

The Saskatchewan Woodworkers' Guild (SWG) is a long-standing community of woodworking enthusiasts, from hobbyists to experienced artisans, that has brought people together in Saskatchewan around a shared passion for wood, craft, and creativity. Founded in 1978 by a small group of woodworkers who met informally to exchange ideas, the Guild has since grown into a vibrant and inclusive provincial network.

Their membership spans many disciplines of woodworking including carving, turning, marquetry, cabinetmaking, restoration, and fine woodworking.

Through regular monthly meetings, frequent "show-and-tell" sessions, demos, classes, shop tours and collaborative events, the Guild offers members opportunities to learn, grow skills, share experiences, and connect with peers across the province.

The Guild also supports members' learning and development through initiatives like the Woodworkers' Development Grant, which helps fund skill-building opportunities and then asks recipients to share what they learned with the broader membership.

Above all, SWG is about community — fostering mentorship, intergenerational knowledge-sharing, and collaboration; celebrating craftsmanship and creativity; and building a legacy of woodworking in Saskatchewan that's accessible, supportive, and inclusive.

The Guild is governed by an elected Executive, with members in good standing selecting directors at the Annual General Meeting who then assume leadership roles such as President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Supported by committees and active member participation, the Guild operates through regular meetings and shared decision-making, ensuring that leadership remains member-driven and responsive to the needs and interests of the community.

Looking into the Future

The SWG is entering an exciting chapter of growth and renewed purpose. With a steadily expanding and diversifying membership, increasing public interest in woodworking, and opportunities for broader community engagement across the province, the Guild is well positioned to build on its strengths and shape a vibrant future.

The development of this Strategic Action Plan is grounded in input from members, the board, and stakeholders gathered through meetings and engagement sessions. It is a proactive step toward strengthening the Guild's structure, deepening volunteer involvement, improving communications, and enhancing the member experience. This plan offers a roadmap to harness the Guild's energy, passion, and creativity to grow its presence and impact across Saskatchewan.

2. Engagement Process

Planning Approach

The strategic planning process was facilitated by Prairie Wild Consulting Co. and guided by the following frameworks and philosophies:

- **Appreciative Inquiry:** A strengths-based facilitation method that generates new ideas and engages stakeholders by building on the organization's existing strengths to foster a positive and innovative environment.
- **Ethical Space:** Introduced by Dr. Willie Ermine in "The Space of Engagement" (2017), this approach fosters a respectful space for diverse worldviews to converge, enhancing inclusivity and collaborative relationships at SWG.

Engagement Process

The development of the SWG Strategic Action Plan was informed through a series of engagement activities with the Executive, membership, and partners over the course of 2024 and 2025. Initial engagement sessions were held in October 2024 and January 2025 including an in-person session that gathered input on priorities, opportunities, and the future direction of the Guild. Follow-up meetings with the Board's Executive took place in March and April 2025 to review emerging themes, refine strategic directions, and guide the development of the plan. A virtual strategic planning session was later held with the Executive in October 2025 to confirm priorities, build consensus, and shape the practical actions that form the foundation of this Strategic Action Plan.

The following insights came through in the engagement process:

- **Transitioning:** The year 2025 was identified as a transition year, focused on foundational work that sets the stage for future success. Some objectives for 2025 included:
 - Initiating important conversations and engagement across the Guild
 - Creating new opportunities for involvement and collaboration
 - Rebuilding energy among members and re-establish momentum
 - Building internal capacity, especially through mentorship
- **Visioning:** Looking ahead, members envision the following outcomes by 2031:
 - Triple the Guild's membership base
 - Establish a strong, vibrant sense of community
 - Foster intergenerational engagement and knowledge sharing

- **Key Priorities:** To achieve the vision, stakeholders identified the following key priorities:
 - Increasing community engagement and visibility through public demonstrations, accessible workshops, and clearer communication about the Guild's role and purpose
 - Working toward a dedicated maker or learning space to support programming and community connection
 - Expanding partnerships and collaboration with local organizations, businesses, schools, and community groups
 - Strengthening the membership experience, including clearer roles, mentorship opportunities, and improved recruitment and retention
 - Enhancing governance and leadership capacity by filling key roles, improving internal communication, and supporting succession planning
 - Maintaining and improving programming and physical space to support learning, collaboration, and skill development
 - Developing sustainable approaches to fundraising and social enterprise aligned with the Guild's mission
 - Strengthening the Guild's digital presence, particularly the website, as a central information and communication hub

At the heart of these efforts lies a commitment to building a creative, supportive, and skilled woodworking community in Saskatchewan - one that values tradition, innovation, and the sharing of knowledge across generations.



3. Mission, Vision & Values Proposition

The SWG is guided by a shared sense of purpose and possibility. Our mission defines why we exist, our vision paints the future we aspire to create, and our values shape how we work together to get there. These guiding statements reflect the voice of our members and serve as a compass for the actions outlined in this plan, ensuring we stay true to who we are, while boldly shaping what comes next.

Vision

By 2031, the Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild envisions a thriving, intergenerational community of makers - increasing our membership, strengthening bonds across the province, and creating a vibrant hub where knowledge, creativity, and craftsmanship are shared across generations.

Mission

The Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild cultivates a thriving community of woodworkers across the province by sharing skills, fostering creativity, and promoting the craft through education, mentorship, and meaningful connection.

Core Values

- ▶ **Engagement:** We believe in active participation and meaningful connection within our membership, with our partners, and across communities, creating a Guild where everyone feels welcome to contribute and belong.
- ▶ **Capacity:** We are committed to strengthening our internal systems, skills, and leadership so that the Guild can thrive, deliver on its goals, and support members to do their best work.
- ▶ **Momentum:** We build on our past successes to keep moving forward with energy and purpose, taking steady, achievable steps toward a vibrant and sustainable future.
- ▶ **Growth:** We embrace opportunities to expand our membership, programs, and partnerships, guided by a vision of a strong and inclusive woodworking community across Saskatchewan.
- ▶ **Community:** We cultivate a sense of shared purpose, trust, and care, recognizing that the Guild's success depends on collaboration, generosity, and mutual support.
- ▶ **Intergenerational Sharing:** We value the exchange of knowledge, experience, and stories across generations—honouring tradition while inspiring innovation for future woodworkers.

4. Strategic Pathways and Actions

The following strategic pathways reflect the shared priorities that have emerged through process. Together, they describe how the SWG can strengthen its community, support learning and mentorship, grow participation, and sustain the organization into the future.

Rather than representing separate initiatives, these pathways are interconnected areas of focus that work together to support a vibrant and resilient Guild. Some actions build on work already underway, while others introduce new opportunities to grow and evolve. Collectively, they provide a practical framework to guide decision-making, encourage shared leadership, and help the Guild move forward in a thoughtful and achievable way over the coming years.

The strategic pathways include:



Membership & Mentorship



Digital Presence



Partnerships & Collaboration



Governance & Leadership



Creative & Sustainable Funding



Community Engagement & Visibility



Programming & Space



Volunteer Leadership & Involvement

Each pathway reflects a key area where focused effort will help strengthen the Guild's impact and long-term sustainability.

To support clarity and implementation, each pathway is organized using a consistent structure:

- **Goal** – the overall change or future state the Guild is working toward within that pathway.
- **Key Outcomes** – the tangible results or improvements that will indicate progress and success over time.
- **Strategic Actions** – the main areas of work that will help move the Guild toward its goal.
- **Initiatives** – practical, achievable activities or first steps that can be undertaken by members and volunteers to advance each action.

Together, this structure connects the Guild's shared vision with clear and attainable steps, helping translate ideas into coordinated action while allowing flexibility as priorities evolve.

Draft

Membership & Mentorship



This pathway supports a welcoming, inclusive, and connected membership experience. It emphasizes building relationships between members, supporting skill-sharing across experience levels, and reducing barriers to participation. By strengthening mentorship, improving communication, and creating social learning opportunities, the Guild can retain members, encourage participation, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

Goal: Members feel connected, supported, and inspired to learn, teach, and participate actively in Guild life.

Key Outcomes

- Improved member retention
- Increased participation at meetings
- Strong intergenerational knowledge sharing
- Greater sense of belonging

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Strengthen Mentorship	Establish voluntary mentor–buddy system
	Recognize mentorship contributions annually
Foster Member Connection	Host social and skills-exchange nights
	Organize shop tours and informal gatherings
	Encourage show-and-tell participation
Reduce Participation Barriers	Maintain updated membership database
	Pilot ride-share coordination
	Improve hybrid meeting access



Digital Presence

This pathway strengthens how the Guild communicates and connects through online tools and technology. Maintaining an accessible website, regular communications, and hybrid participation options allows members and the public to stay informed and engaged, regardless of location. A strong digital presence also helps document and preserve the Guild's knowledge and activities.

Goal: Members and the public can easily access Guild information, learning resources, and activities.

Key Outcomes:

- Improved communication consistency
- Increased online engagement
- Expanded access to Guild knowledge

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Strengthen Communications	Maintain regular website and newsletter updates
	Share member projects monthly
	Track engagement metrics
Support Hybrid Participation	Standardize meeting technology setup
	Record demonstrations and presentations
	Assign ongoing tech support volunteers



Partnerships & Collaboration

This pathway recognizes that the Guild grows stronger through relationships with other organizations, businesses, and community groups. By collaborating on projects, sharing resources, and participating in broader maker and cultural networks, SWG can expand its reach, create new learning opportunities, and increase sustainability while contributing to the wider community.

Goal: The Guild is a collaborative partner contributing to Saskatoon's maker, education, and creative communities.

Key Outcomes

- Increased joint programming
- Expanded sponsorship opportunities
- Shared resources and audiences

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Strengthen Community Partnerships	Identify annual partnership priorities
	Assign partnership liaison roles
	Develop collaborative projects
Connect with the Maker Ecosystem	Participate in hobbyist and maker events
	Collaborate with turning, carving, and related groups
	Explore shared insurance or joint initiatives where appropriate
Build Business Relationships	Maintain sponsor outreach visits
	Share Guild promotional materials with partners
	Develop mutually beneficial sponsorship opportunities



Governance & Leadership

This pathway supports effective leadership and organizational continuity within the Guild. It focuses on recruiting and supporting volunteers in leadership roles, clarifying responsibilities, and preserving organizational knowledge. Strong governance helps distribute workload, prevent burnout, and ensure the Guild remains resilient and well-organized as it evolves.

Goal: The Guild operates with confident leadership, clear roles, and smooth succession between volunteers.

Key Outcomes

- Reduced executive burnout
- Easier leadership transitions
- Improved organizational continuity

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Strengthen Leadership Recruitment	Begin succession conversations early
	Personally invite emerging leaders
	Distribute roles across committees
Improve Organizational Knowledge	Develop executive role guides
	Create shared digital archive
	Maintain annual transition process



Creative & Sustainable Funding

This pathway explores sustainable ways to support Guild activities financially while celebrating member craftsmanship. Through events, raffles, and potential social enterprise opportunities, SWG can generate resources that support programming, equipment, and future growth while increasing public engagement with woodworking.

Goal: The Guild maintains stable financial resources that support programming and long-term growth.

Key Outcomes

- Diversified revenue sources
- Increased financial confidence
- Stronger community support

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Expand Event-Based Fundraising	Pilot wooden art silent auction
	Host wood raffles
	Integrate fundraising into existing events
Explore Social Enterprise Opportunities	Assess feasibility of product sales
	Test small-scale market participation
	Present recommendations to Executive

Community Engagement & Visibility



This pathway focuses on increasing awareness of the Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild and sharing the value of woodworking with the broader community. By participating in public events, offering introductory opportunities, and telling the Guild’s story more intentionally, SWG can attract new members, inspire interest in the craft, and strengthen its presence within Saskatoon and beyond. Community engagement also helps members take pride in showcasing their skills and contributions.

Goal: The Saskatchewan Woodworkers Guild is widely recognized as a welcoming, active community where people discover woodworking, connect with others, and celebrate craftsmanship.

Key Outcomes

- Increased public awareness of the Guild
- Growth in new and younger members
- Stronger community partnerships
- Increased participation in public events

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Increase Public Presence	Host regular public demonstrations and outreach events
	Participate in maker fairs and community festivals
	Develop portable display materials and demo kits
Tell the Guild’s story	Launch “Why Woodworking?” member storytelling campaign
	Share projects and member profiles online
	Expand newsletter and social media contributions
Create Accessible Entry Points	Offer beginner-friendly workshops
	Partner with schools, libraries, and community centres
	Develop clear pathways from public events to membership



Programming & Space

This pathway focuses on the activities and environments that enable woodworking learning and collaboration. It includes developing programs that reflect member interests, improving current working spaces, and exploring future opportunities for shared or expanded facilities. Thoughtful programming and functional spaces help members learn, teach, and create together safely and comfortably.

Goal: Members have consistent opportunities to learn, teach, and create together in safe and accessible environments.

Key Outcomes:

- Programs aligned with member interests
- Increased participation in workshops
- Improved workspace usability
- Clear direction for future facility planning

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Expand Learning Opportunities	Annual member programming survey
	Regular demonstrations and workshops
	Record and archive demonstrations
Improve Guild Spaces	Prioritize safety and lighting improvements
	Coordinate shared equipment use
	Plan gradual upgrades aligned with Bus Barn future
Explore Future Space Opportunities	Pilot maker space pop-ups
	Test community workshop days
	Gather feedback to inform long-term planning



Volunteer Leadership & Involvement

This pathway focuses on supporting the volunteers who make the Guild possible. It encourages shared responsibility, clear opportunities for involvement, and recognition of member contributions. By strengthening volunteer onboarding, coordination, and support, the Guild can build leadership capacity, reduce burnout, and sustain momentum over time.

Goal: Volunteer leadership is distributed, supported, and rewarding, ensuring the Guild remains member-driven.

Key Outcomes:

- Increased volunteer participation
- Reduced reliance on a few individuals
- Strong culture of shared ownership

Strategic Actions	Initiatives
Create Clear Volunteer Pathways	Ask new members about interests during onboarding
	Offer small, time-limited volunteer roles
	Match volunteers to strategic pathways
Support and Recognize Volunteers	Quarterly volunteer check-ins
	Maintain shared task list
	Celebrate contributions publicly

5. Next Steps: Putting the Plan into Action

Many of the priorities identified in this Strategic Action Plan build on activities already underway, such as mentorship, demonstrations, partnerships, and member-led learning, and recognize the strong foundation the Guild has already established.

Implementation will be guided by a practical, flexible approach that prioritizes:

- achievable actions;
- supports volunteer capacity; and
- allows the Guild to learn and adapt over time.

Rather than trying to advance all initiatives at once, the Guild is encouraged to identify a manageable set of priorities each year that align with member interest, available capacity, and emerging opportunities.

The detailed work plan tables provided in Appendix A translate the Strategic Action Plan into concrete next steps, timelines, and areas of responsibility. These tables are intended to be used by the Executive to identify annual priorities, assign roles, and track progress across the strategic pathways.

As a living document, the work plan should be revisited and updated regularly. It is intended to be brought forward at Executive meetings as a guiding tool to support decision-making, align efforts, and maintain momentum. Regular updates and highlights can also be shared with members to encourage ongoing participation, transparency, and shared ownership in advancing the Guild's priorities.

