



**THOMPSON  
RIVERS  
UNIVERSITY**

Integrated  
Planning &  
Effectiveness

# Realizing Envision TRU

Green Paper

Content Draft for Discussion

March 8, 2021

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## Our Vision

Community-minded with a global conscience, we boldly redefine the university as a place of belonging — *Kw'seltktnéws* (we are all related and interconnected with nature, each other, and all things) — where all people are empowered to transform themselves, their communities, and the world.

## Our Mission

TRU is a comprehensive, learner-centred, sustainable university that serves its regional, national, and international learners and their communities through high quality and flexible education, training, research and scholarship.

## Our Values

- Inclusion and Diversity
- Community-Mindedness
- Curiosity
- Sustainability

## Our 10-year Strategic Change Goals

1. Eliminate achievement gaps
2. Honor truth, reconciliation and rights
3. Lead in community research and scholarship
4. Design lifelong learning

Source: Thompson Rivers University. (2020). [Vision Statement](#). Thompson Rivers University.

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A *Green Paper* is a preliminary report of proposals published to stimulate discussion.<sup>1</sup>

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Envision TRU culminated with the approval of a new institutional vision, values and change goals.<sup>2</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic has put a pause on our work towards vision realization and goals prioritization. We now are picking up where we left off. This green paper is intended to present a general outline and stimulate discussion on how Thompson Rivers University (TRU) can work towards living our new vision and achievement of our 10-year goals.

Over the years TRU has been progressively moving toward developing a cohesive planning structure and building a culture of integrated planning. In the last five years, TRU hosted Society for College and University (SCUP) Planning Institutes<sup>3</sup> to support TRU's decision makers in planning initiatives. In addition to continuous improvements in planning processes, regular briefing notes and scenario planning workshops enable TRU to respond to immediate challenges, prepare an informed response, and navigate the waters of the uncertain future. Building on the spirit of interconnectedness (*Kw'seltktnéws*) articulated in the new vision statement, TRU is embarking on formalizing this process, guided by the best practices published by SCUP and others. SCUP resources and methods are materials and best practices designed specifically for post-secondary education. A glossary of terms is available on the SCUP website.<sup>4</sup>

The institutional integrated planning project is aimed at operationalizing TRU's new vision and developing an implementation plan to aid achieving the 10-year change goals. This process is being led by the Provost. Using a committee and working groups structure, over the next 11 months, project teams will develop a strategic

implementation plan for TRU's new strategic change goals as well as an institutional integrated planning model. These will help TRU to identify academic and service priorities and guide resource allocation to support these priorities. Possible models, processes, and frameworks will be described in this paper.

Under the working title "Realizing Envision TRU", this project will culminate with a presentation of a strategic implementation plan for endorsement to the TRU governance bodies at the end of fiscal year 2021/22.

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## WHAT IS INTEGRATED PLANNING

According to SCUP, *strategic planning* is a deliberate, disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an institution is, what it does, and why it does it.<sup>5</sup> *Integrated planning* is described as a sustainable approach to planning that builds relationships, aligns the organization, and emphasizes preparedness for change.<sup>6</sup> Integrated planning is both an overarching model of alignment...and a process of planning within each of the institution's component planning efforts.<sup>7</sup> For this purpose, this paper will define strategic planning as a framework within an integrated planning model. Both concepts will be considered in greater detail.

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*While strategic planning focuses on the future and how to adapt and operational planning focuses on resourcing actions in the short term, integrated planning looks at how an organization can plan across multiple functions, levels, locations, and other natural or artificial divisions.*

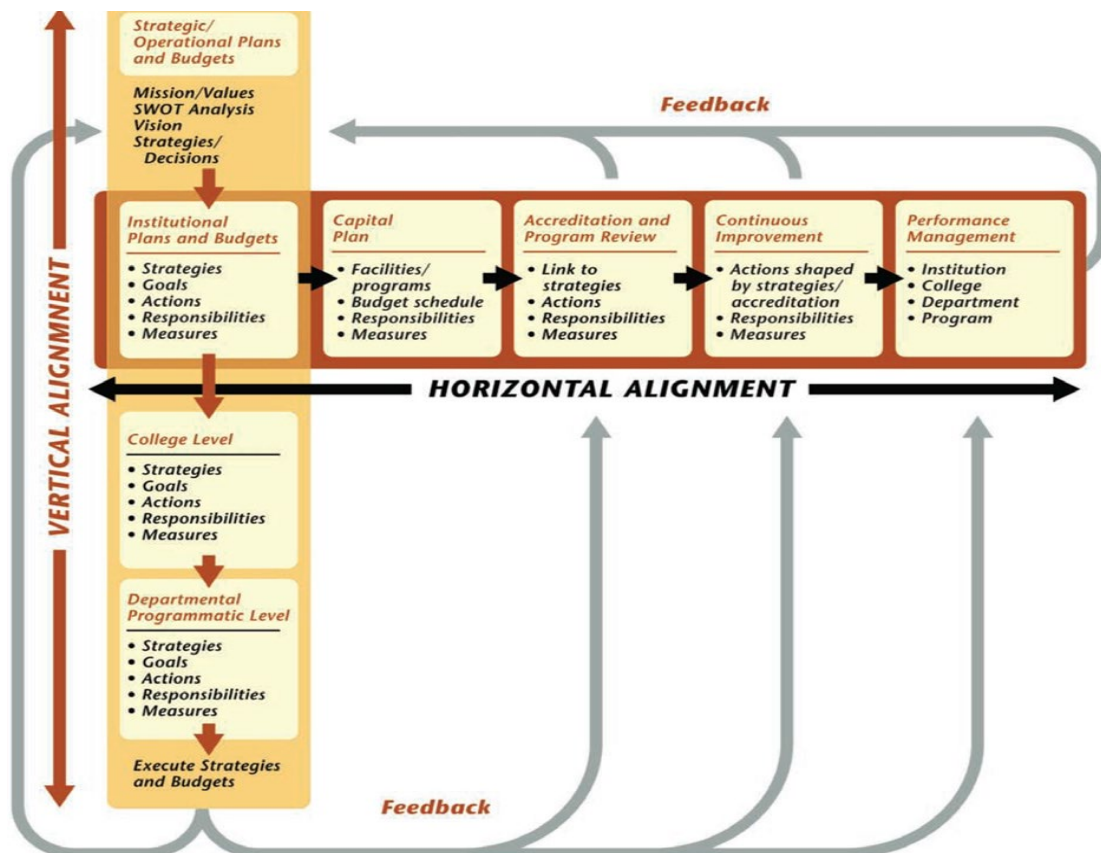
*Rob Brodnick<sup>8</sup>*

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Integrated planning is a multi-phased sustainable planning approach that builds interorganizational relationships, aligns financial and capital resources based on academic priorities and emphasizes preparedness for inevitable external changes.<sup>9</sup> By following the institution's governance processes, and its mission, vision, and strategic priorities, integrated planning helps institutions to deploy its resources to provide directions for institutional changes and improvements.<sup>10</sup> It emphasizes transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, and ultimately increases the institution's agility and strategic thinking. Integrated planning is not only a process of planning within each unit; it is an overarching model of alignment that strengthens institutional planning efforts.<sup>11</sup> Achieving strategic alignment should be approached collectively and holistically.<sup>12</sup> Vertical alignment (see Figure 1) happens when strategic plans at programmatic, faculty, school, and departmental levels align with strategic plans at the institutional level.

Horizontal alignment happens with the coordination of strategic planning, capital planning, accreditation, program reviews, continuous improvement, and performance management.<sup>13</sup> Utilizing an integrated approach allows various parts of the institution to engage in strategic management, not just strategic planning.

Figure 1 Integrated Planning, Norris & Poulton (2008)



Academic plans are often a principal component and a driver of institutional planning activities.<sup>14,15</sup> Academic plans are derived from an institutional mission that outlines service choices and scope of work. However, a lack of planning (e.g., financial, capital, information technology, and advancement) can disrupt the most enabling function of an institution—to serve its learners.<sup>16</sup> While academic plans are at the core of integrated planning, the ultimate purpose of the plan is to help the institution to fulfill its vision.

The integrated plan itself is as important as the planning process.<sup>17</sup> The process brings beneficiaries and collaborators together and makes the integrated plan authentic and unique to the institution.<sup>18</sup> In the book on *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation*, Philip Selznick remarks “strategies take on value only as committed people infuse them with energy”.<sup>19</sup>

Building on the extensive consultation and feedback of Envision TRU and other plans, the TRU community will work together on operationalizing the institutional vision and change goals, including priorities and institutional resources wrapped around supporting the plan.

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## PLANNING PROCESS MODEL

### *Processes, Models and Frameworks*

As defined here, integrated planning is a *process*. Models of the planning process provide the high-level structure, a blueprint to follow. Strategic planning *frameworks* provide the design principles; more than one framework can be used for strategic planning.<sup>20</sup> The first step is to select an integrated planning process model and then select one or more strategic planning frameworks.

Integrated planning processes vary among institutions across Canada based on an institution's history, size, and organization. The most common steps in integrated processes are:<sup>21</sup>

- I. **Goal setting and scanning:** pre-planning for a new plan by reviewing departmental goals and assessing the environment.

It is typical that an integrated planning process launches with a consultation and/or discussion of a unit's strategic direction and its alignment with institutional mission, vision, and strategic priorities. Environmental scanning provides a contextual piece to exploration and analysis of factors affecting institutions.

- II. **Implementation:** creating a plan and an implementation roadmap framework

At this stage, a unit identifies strategies and maps tactics to implement those strategies. Some possible frameworks are presented later in this paper.

- III. **Monitoring and forecasting:** evaluating outcomes

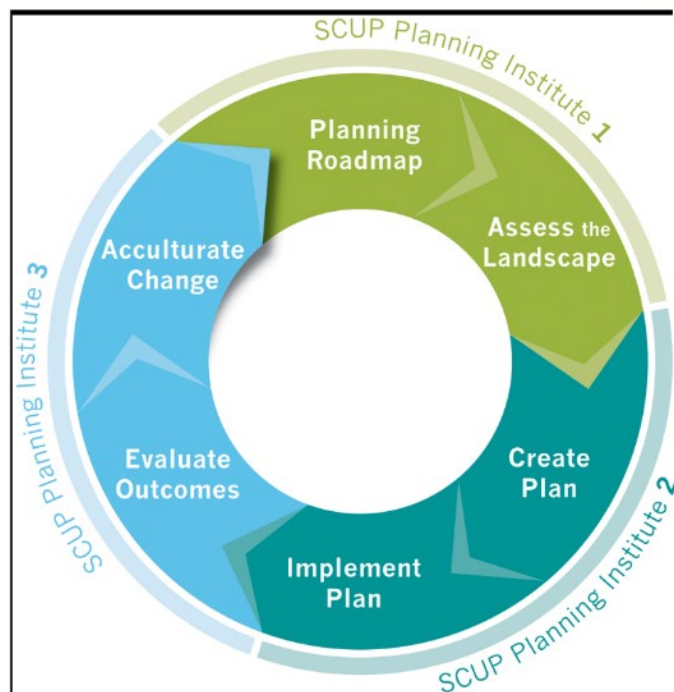
Consistent, robust analysis and assessment about progress toward goals and objectives is critical to the success of the integrated planning process.<sup>22</sup>

The development of planning and assessment capabilities should be viewed as a journey rather than a destination. At the core of the process is a notion that "change is not a one-time event—it is a continuous process."<sup>23</sup> Thus, an integrated plan produces the best results when it is implemented as an iterative continuous process.<sup>24,25</sup>

The SCUP integrated planning process model has been developed for post-secondary education and is a generally accepted best practice. SCUP's three planning institutes have been conducted onsite and many at TRU have received the training.

Figure 2 Integrated Planning Model

## The SCUP Integrated Planning Model



The advantage of integrated planning as an approach to resource allocation is that it clearly communicates institutional direction and priorities in any given budget year.<sup>26</sup> As a result of this process, an organization improves the coordination and comprehensiveness of strategic planning efforts between its organizational capacity, strategy, and financial performance. This process shapes and guides the entire organization as it evolves over time and within the community.<sup>27</sup> The outcome of this process sets the standards and formalized procedures for how planning is done and what sort of outputs are expected from a planning process.<sup>28,29</sup> It is a dynamic document that reflects the university response to its changing environment and is updated regularly.

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*[Planning is] a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions.*

*Henry Mintzberg<sup>30</sup>*

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Many universities across Canada and the United States engage in an integrated planning process. There are varying levels of understanding and degrees of implementation of integrated planning processes across post-secondary institutions. Several Canadian institutions are involved with integrated planning including: [Algonquin College](#), [Athabasca University](#), [Capilano University](#), [Dalhousie University](#), [Kwantlen Polytechnic University](#), [Simon Fraser University](#), [University of Northern British Columbia](#), [University of Guelph](#),



[University of Saskatchewan](#), [University of Victoria](#), [Vancouver Island University](#) and [Western University](#). An integrated planning process has also been adopted by international and national agencies such as the World Bank,<sup>31</sup> [United Nations](#), [Treasury Board of Canada](#) and [Statistics Canada](#). SCUP has many examples of plans posted on the resources section of the website.<sup>32</sup>

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## WHY ADOPT INTEGRATED PLANNING AT TRU

Designing, developing, and adopting integrated strategic planning at TRU is the next step from the Envision process.

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*The purpose of articulating vision, values, and goals is to affect behaviors and outcomes, to make positive changes for students and communities. To be influential in this way, a vision statement must be connected to a process of implementation and measurement of outcomes.*

*Brett Fairbairn<sup>33</sup>*

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Despite the seemingly good sense of integrating and aligning planning, a working process can be an elusive creature.<sup>34</sup> Why? Because it involves people, and it is complicated. The elements of planning academic, facilities, and financial, all involve independent players with different perspectives. These plans are all developed at different times, with different timeframes: capital plans may have a five-year timeframe, and financial budgets may be annual. From the top, the mission, vision and values (MVV) drive the academic plan, which in turn drives the strategic plan, the campus master plan. All of the other plans (enrollment management, student services, housing, technology, etc.) are shaped by the previous plans, with integrated planning occurring at each stage.<sup>35</sup>

Not only is the internal planning structure complicated, so is the external environment; institutions need to pivot and adapt to an environment that remains volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous—or VUCA.<sup>36</sup> Volatile relates to the nature, speed and magnitude of change, that the change occurring now may not occur again, it may not be a repeatable pattern. Uncertainty means the lack of predictability in issues and events. The external environment is complex; solutions may not fit a logic model. Events can be ambiguous whereby the possible impact on an institution may not be initially understood. The COVID-19 pandemic is an example of a significant VUCA event and highlights the importance of being able to pivot quickly while continuing to be aligned to the mission, vision and values of the institution.

In summary, integrated planning is an intentional and disciplined process that is sustainable, collaborative, aligned and ready for change. Integrated planning will allow us to realize the aspirations and change goals set out by Envision TRU in a way that aligns and dovetails with existing plans and resources.

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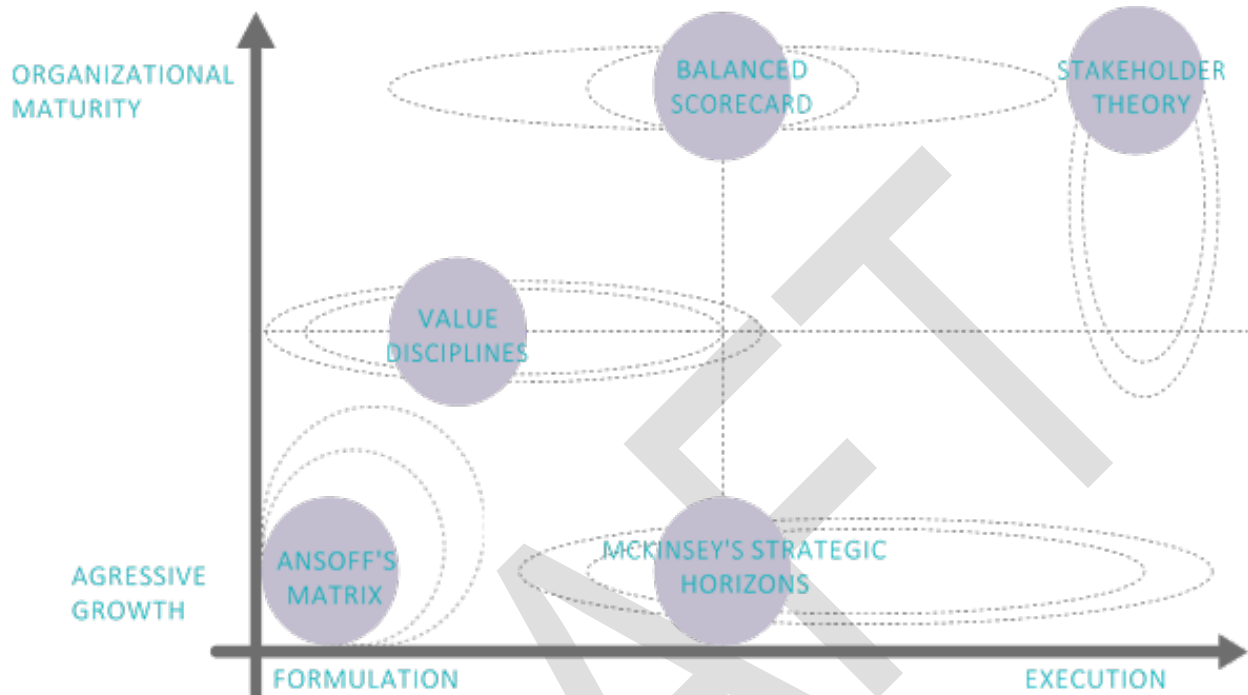
## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK APPROACHES

There are different approaches to strategic planning and management. Some popular strategic frameworks are included in the following graphic for consideration, based on



organizational maturity and where an organization is on their strategic planning journey, in formulation or execution mode.<sup>37</sup> Thompson Rivers University can be classified as a reasonably mature institution and starting along the execution of its latest strategic goals.

Figure 3 Five Popular Strategic Frameworks



### Ansoff's Matrix<sup>38</sup>

Figure 4 Ansoff's Matrix

	Existing Products	New Products
Existing Markets	MARKET PENETRATION	PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
New Markets	MARKET DEVELOPMENT	DIVERSIFICATION

This framework is best for organizations at the early stage of their strategic planning and considering aggressive growth. The model consists of a four-square matrix of markets and products: existing and new. While this model may not appropriate for the entire institution, it may be applicable to

Low Risk / Low Return High Risk / High Return

Market Penetration      Market Development      Product Development      Diversification

certain areas within the institution; the matrix creates awareness of the possible strategies for growth and the risk/rewards available for each strategy. Student recruitment strategies can be described with this model whereby providing existing programming to new geographic or demographic market segments is a market development strategy.

### Value Disciplines<sup>39</sup>

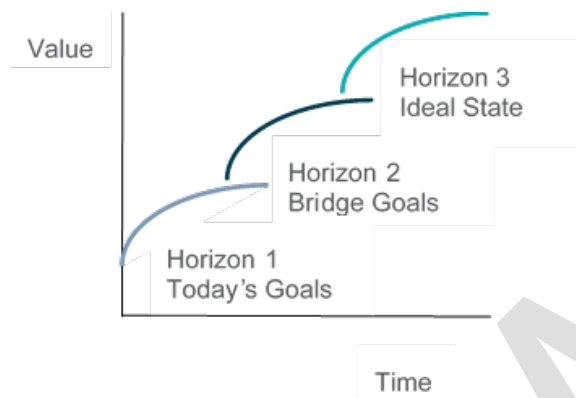
Adopting the Value Disciplines framework considers three values: Customer Intimacy, Program Leadership, and Operational Excellence. While an institution is required to be sufficiently good at all three, it should choose to excel at only one value. This model puts

the spotlight on values, emphasizing that an institution cannot be all things to all people. Considering this set may focus which one (customer, program, operation) is most in line with the institution's values and goals.

### McKinsey's Strategic Horizons<sup>40</sup>

Using the McKinsey's Strategic Horizons framework means creating a set of long-term goals focused on innovation, using 10% of its effort on horizon 3, then set out the immediate main goals, using 70% of effort for horizon 1, then create bridging activities, using 20% of effort on horizon 2; the bridging activities will take the organization from today to the ideal future state.

Figure 5 McKinsey's Strategic Horizons



**Horizon 3:** Create genuinely new business, new elements that don't exist today.

**Horizon 2:** Nurture emerging business, developing new programming, developing new geographic markets. May have false starts.

**Horizon 1:** Maintain & defend core business, business process improvements, student success this semester.

In particular the framework lends itself to organizations which have identified that

growth and innovation have been a stumbling block.

### Stakeholder Theory<sup>41</sup>

This framework requires the mature organization to categorize goals by which key stakeholders will benefit the most from that particular goal. This a good strategic framework for organizations who aren't specifically focused on growth and have a clear idea of who they need to serve. This framework is popular with non-profits and government organizations because it keeps the organization focused on delivering on goals that meet the needs of primary stakeholders. Stakeholder Theory is based on the assumption that businesses can only be considered successful when they deliver value to the majority of their stakeholders. The best way to apply the stakeholder theory model to your business is in conjunction with another planning framework.

## Balanced Scorecard<sup>42</sup>

The balanced scorecard is a process, not a simple categorization exercise. It is often considered as a reporting framework rather than strategic management framework. This is best when mature organizations want to focus on performance towards meeting financial targets.

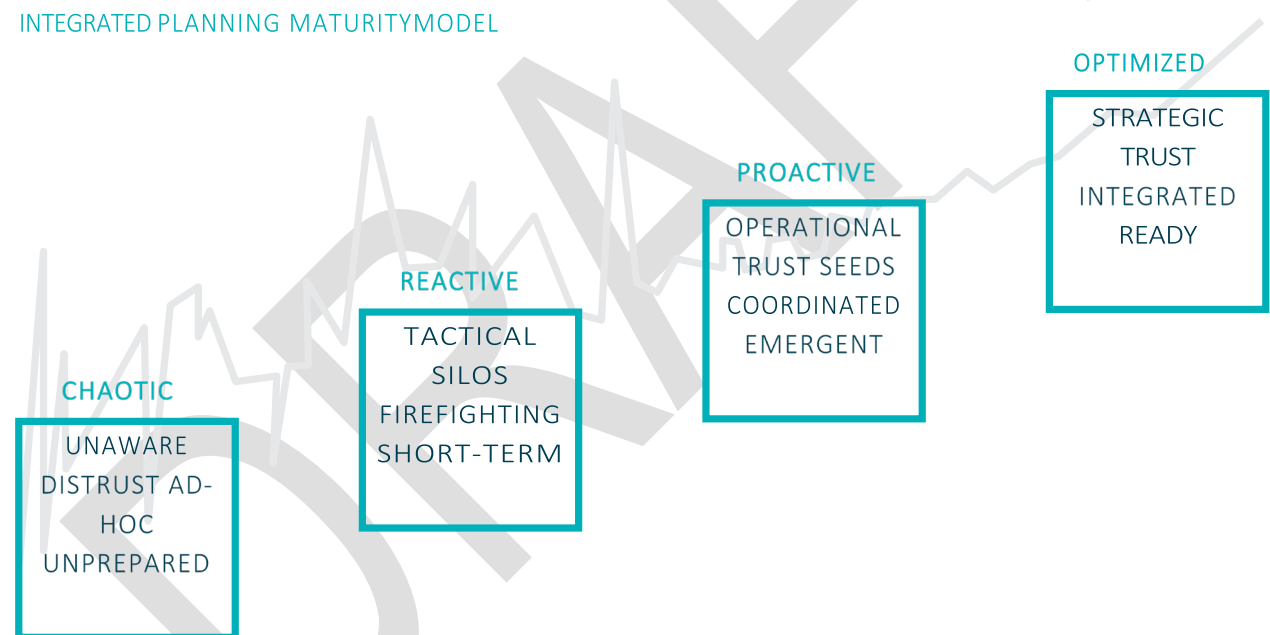
These are some of the most popular strategic planning frameworks, presented here for discussion. Other frameworks may be considered. More than one framework may be chosen.

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## INTEGRATED PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing an integrated planning model will involve change management and process improvement to the existing planning efforts. Recognizing where TRU is on the planning journey helps determine what is needed. The stages of maturity are described in Figure 6 below.<sup>43</sup>

Figure 6 Integrated Planning Maturity Model



According to author Patrick Sanaghan, strategic planning—both in the corporate world and within higher education—tends to break down during implementation. Writing the plan(s) is easy, putting the plans into action is much more difficult: some plans may be too ambitious or not based on solid data. However, strategic planning in higher education falls short of its potential or simply fails for one main reason: The internal stakeholders feel no connection to the plan and therefore are not committed to its implementation. In this case, as Sanaghan points out, it is the process that is the problem.<sup>44</sup>

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## HOW WILL WE REALIZE ENVISION TRU?

There are multiple layers of planning already in existence at TRU. The purpose of this project is not about adding another plan. It is aimed at coordinating and aligning existing plans, identifying and addressing planning gaps to ensure we develop a shared understanding of institutional priorities and resource allocations to support them.

Building from existing planning processes and cycles to incorporate institutional priorities and goals this project will take an integrated planning approach, following the SCUP model and best practices.<sup>45</sup> This will be an open and participatory process seeking input from across the university led by the Provost and VP Academic and Research. SCUP resources, advice, and consulting services will be sought to facilitate the success of this project.

Given that TRU has been actively engaging in planning activities, a wealth of information and resources are available to support the development of the integrated plan. This process will be built upon the information available from Envision TRU, People Plan, SEM Plan, Sustainability Plan, NWCCU Accreditation processes and other documents. Using a gap analysis approach, the existing strategic unit plans will be analyzed to identify gaps and opportunities. This process will provide stakeholders with tools to make adjustments and inform new plans, and thus facilitate the discussion on how to put our vision and values into practice and ensure we achieve 10-year strategic change goals.

It will be key to engage members of the TRU community who have been involved in the creation of existing unit strategic plans. The provost will lead the process on behalf of TRU leadership and will present the draft plan to governing bodies (Senate, PCOL, and Board) for approval. The following are proposed groups to undertake this project with preliminary functions suggested in draft (see Figure 7 below).

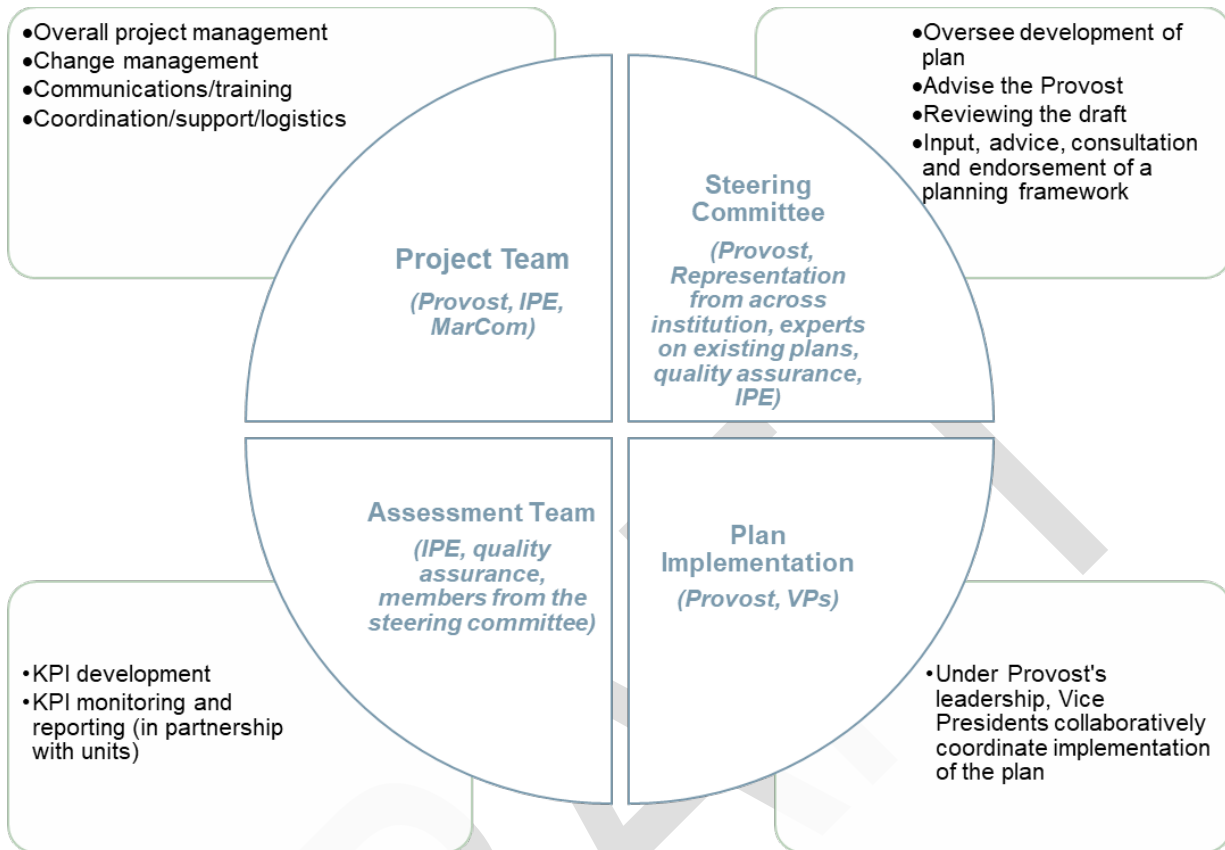
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*Only people—with all of their quirks, interests, passions, energy, and hopes—can implement strategic plans.*

*Patrick Sanaghan*

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Figure 7 Project Committees



## PLANNING, BUDGETING AND ASSESSMENT

It is intended that priorities identified in the institutional strategic plan will constitute the basis for resource allocations. These priorities together with goals identified in unit-level strategic plans will be referenced in annual budget processes. University resources will be allocated according to priorities in the institutional strategic plan.

Integrated strategic planning ensures the aligning the university budget and plans with the academic mission of the university. It ensures that goals are integrated across academic and administrative units. Integrated strategic planning provides a robust structure that enables clear and efficient decision making, including the allocation of resources.

In line with institutional commitment to continuous improvement, this project will also include the development of comparators and indicators and continual monitoring.

## NEXT STEPS

Discussion on the proposed process outlined in this green paper is in progress. A preliminary timeframe is presented in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8 Preliminary Project Timeframe



## END NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> TheGuardian.com (2009) [What is a Green Paper?](#)
- <sup>2</sup> Thompson Rivers University. (2020). [Vision Statement](#). Thompson Rivers University.
- <sup>3</sup> Society for College and University Planning. (n.d.). <https://www.scup.org/planning-institute/>
- <sup>4</sup> SCUP Glossary: <https://www.scup.org/resource/integrated-planning-glossary/>
- <sup>5</sup> Society for College and University Planning. (n.d.). <https://www.scup.org/planning-type/strategic-planning/>
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid
- <sup>8</sup> Brodnick, (2016) *What is Integrated Planning?* <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-integrated-planning-robert-brodnick/>
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- <sup>10</sup> Lubin, J., & Palacat, F. (n.d.). [The How's and Why's of Integrated Planning](#).
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- <sup>17</sup> Tromp, S. A., & Ruben, B. D. (2014). *Strategic Planning in Higher Education: A Guide for Leaders*. National Association of College and University Business Officers.
- <sup>18</sup> Fullan, M. (2007). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- <sup>19</sup> Selznick, P. (n.d.). *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation*. Harper & Row.
- <sup>20</sup> Wright, T., (2019) <https://www.cascade.app/blog/strategy-planning-models>
- <sup>21</sup> Society for College and University Planning. (n.d.). [The Arc of Integrated Planning](#).
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid, Bryson, J. M. (2011).
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid, Rowley, D. J., & Sherman, H. (2004).
- <sup>24</sup> Chance, S. (2010). [Strategic by Design Iterative Approaches to Educational Planning](#). *Planning for Higher Education Journal*, 38(2).
- <sup>25</sup> Dorst, K. (2006). [Design Problems and Design Paradoxes](#). *Design Issues*, 22(3), 4–17.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, Bryson
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid, Brodnick, R., & Norris, D. (2016).



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- <sup>28</sup> Mintzberg, H. (1994). *The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning*. Simon and Schuster.
- <sup>29</sup> Batley, Richard & Cabral, Lídia & Souza, Celina. (2007). Sector Wide Approaches in Brazil: Features, drivers and emerging lessons.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid, Mintzberg, (1994)
- <sup>31</sup> Batley, Richard & Cabral, Lídia & Souza, Celina. (2007). Sector Wide Approaches in Brazil: Features, drivers and emerging lessons.
- <sup>32</sup> [Society for College and University Planning](#). (n.d.).
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- <sup>35</sup> Ibid. p 29
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- <sup>40</sup> Ibid
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid. Santili, N., & Wutka, S., (n.d.)
- <sup>44</sup> Sanaghan, P., (2009) Collaborative Strategic Planning in Higher Education, NACUBO
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