

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

April 2026

Over recent weeks, I have continued to meet with faculty, staff, students, and partners across our campuses. These conversations have highlighted the dedication and creativity that define our university community. I remain grateful for the insight and candour shared with me as we move forward together.

Earlier this month, I also addressed the General Academic Assembly (GAA), which brought together faculty, staff, and senior leaders for an important moment of reflection on our academic mission. The assembly focused on the pressures higher education is facing, and the ways USask can continue to ground our planning and positioning in the strengths offered by the Saskatchewan context. The insights shared at the GAA continue to inform the university's work and I am grateful for the thoughtful engagement of our academic community,

Across USask, I see a community responding to change with purpose and collaboration. The work underway — from strategic planning to research leadership to student support — reflects a university committed to strengthening Saskatchewan and contributing to global progress.

UPLAN 2035: UPDATE

Council received an overview of UPlan 2035 in my previous report. Since that time, the university has moved further into the engagement phase of the planning process. Over the past month, we have begun a series of campus conversations with faculty and staff to gather early perspectives on USask's strengths, priorities, and opportunities for the decade ahead.

These discussions are helping to identify emerging themes that will guide the next stage of planning. The UPlan 2035 process includes several phases: preparation, engagement, drafting, refinement, and approval. We remain in the engagement phase, which is focused

on listening to students, faculty, staff, alumni, Indigenous partners, and external stakeholders.

Broader opportunities for participation, including surveys, town halls, and targeted discussions, will continue to roll out throughout the spring.

We welcome the insights of council members as this work progresses. Your perspectives are essential to shaping a plan that reflects the full breadth of our university and the communities we serve.

PROVINCIAL BUDGET 2026

The Government of Saskatchewan released its [2026–27 budget](#) in late March, reaffirming strong provincial support for post-secondary education and building on the four-year funding agreement announced in November 2025. For USask, the budget provides \$346 million in total funding from the Ministry of Advanced Education, including \$318.9 million in operating funding, an increase of \$18.3 million over the previous year. This investment includes targeted support to expand undergraduate medical education by 20 seats and to increase Saskatchewan-based Nurse Practitioner training by 13 seats.

The province is also providing \$25.8 million for infrastructure and major capital projects, an increase of \$3.7 million from last year. This includes continued planning support for the expansion of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. These investments strengthen USask's ability to respond to provincial labour-force needs, advance research and innovation, and maintain critical infrastructure. As noted in the provincial announcement, this level of support reflects confidence in USask's role in strengthening Saskatchewan's social and economic landscape and reinforces the shared commitment to building a stronger, more vibrant province.

LEADERSHIP UPDATES

Vice-President University Relations Cheryl Hamelin will retire on April 30, 2026, after four years of exceptional service to her alma mater. During her tenure, Cheryl strengthened fundraising, communications, alumni engagement, strategic events, advancement operations, and Huskie Athletics. Under her leadership, the [Be What the World Needs campaign](#) became the largest fundraising campaign in Saskatchewan's history, raising more than \$572 million and advancing student success, critical research, Indigenous achievement, and visionary spaces across campus. Her ability to inspire donors, volunteers, and colleagues has left a lasting legacy.

I have deeply valued the opportunity to work alongside Cheryl. Her expertise, clarity of purpose, and steady leadership have strengthened this university and elevated the work of advancement in meaningful ways. I am grateful for her knowledge and for the lasting impact she has had on USask. Cheryl, thank you for your partnership, your generosity, and the example you have set.

Dr. Angela Jaime will take on a new role as Vice-President Indigenous at the University of Victoria and will remain with USask until mid-June. Angela's leadership has shaped USask in meaningful and enduring ways through initiatives such as the [Indigenous Summer Institute](#), the [deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin Indigenous Truth Policy on Indigenous membership/citizenship](#), the [ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan Indigenous Strategy](#), and the [Smudging and Ceremonies Policy](#). She has also built, mentored, and empowered a strong team within the Office of the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement, and they will continue this important work throughout the transition.

Working with Angela has been a privilege. Her insight, generosity, and unwavering commitment to Indigenous achievement have strengthened the work around her and shaped how this university understands leadership grounded in community, truth, and relationship. I am sincerely grateful for her vision and for the profound and lasting contributions she has made to this university. Angela, thank you for everything you have shared, built, and inspired here at USask.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

[USask acquires quantum computer in huge step for research and innovation](#)

USask's acquisition of Canada's first university owned-and-operated, vendor-supported, full-stack open-architecture quantum computer continues to generate significant interest across campus and among partners. Over the past month, research teams have begun preparing early-stage project proposals, and cross-disciplinary discussions are underway to identify opportunities in health, agriculture, energy, and cybersecurity. Planning continues for training and capacity-building to support faculty and students. This initiative positions USask as a national leader in quantum innovation.

Additional Research Highlights

In March, USask received \$6.2 million in Canada Foundation for Innovation funding to support the development of a [new poultry laying research facility](#), strengthening national capacity in animal health and agricultural innovation. The College of Dentistry also secured

a \$2-million international research partnership with the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), establishing a five-year collaboration focused on oral, dental, and craniofacial research. These investments reflect the continued growth of USask's research enterprise and the impact of our partnerships locally and globally.

HUSKIE SALUTE

Huskie Athletics recently celebrated the achievements of student-athletes at the annual Huskie Salute, recognizing excellence in competition, academics, and community leadership. The event brought together student-athletes, coaches, staff, and supporters to honour accomplishments across all Huskie teams and to celebrate the contributions these students make both on and off the field. The Salute continues to be an important moment each year to recognize the dedication, resilience, and leadership of our student-athletes and the staff who support them.

CLOSING REMARKS

The past month has demonstrated the resilience and commitment of our university community. As UPlan 2035 continues to take shape, the insight and engagement of faculty, staff, students, and partners have been essential in identifying the priorities that will guide USask in the decade ahead. The thoughtful contributions shared through early conversations, consultations, and collaborative work are already strengthening the foundation of the plan. Your guidance, questions, and perspectives help ensure that our academic mission stays at the forefront of institutional decision-making. I want to express my appreciation for the time, expertise, and care you bring to this work, and for the steady commitment you show to our students, our colleagues, and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued leadership, partnership, and engagement as we move forward together.