



Strategic Plan

2026-2028

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Office of the CIO

A Message from the NDUS/CTS CIO

It is my honor to present the CTS Strategic Plan, charting our course in support of the North Dakota University System's mission and ultimately driving impactful progress for our campuses, students, and communities.

This plan reflects a comprehensive and collaborative effort among CTS leadership. Together, we have thoroughly reviewed our past achievements, identified current challenges, and established focused priorities for the years ahead. Our mission remains unwavering: to deliver trusted technical and professional services that empower the strategic objectives of the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education.



NDUS/CTS CIO, Corey Quirk

Looking ahead, our vision is to foster an organizational culture grounded in exceptional service, strong security, and seamless access to information. The strategies outlined in this plan are intended to enhance workforce agility, strengthen data governance, and bolster our cybersecurity posture—while remaining responsive to the evolving needs of our stakeholders.

The key areas of focus include:

- Building a workplace culture that attracts and retains top talent.
- Empowering our employees and leaders to innovate and reach their full potential.
- Enhancing communication and engagement throughout the system.
- Prioritizing continuous improvement and organizational resilience.
- Advancing security capabilities to safeguard people, data, and systems.
- Expanding and modernizing IT service management and knowledge platforms.

Our roadmap is ambitious yet practical, grounded in actionable initiatives and measurable outcomes. We will regularly assess our progress, address emerging challenges, and keep our stakeholders informed. Most importantly, we remain committed to delivering value, advancing student success, and leveraging the collective strengths of our unified system.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment as we move forward together on this strategic journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corey M Quirk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "M" in the middle.

About the Strategic Plan

The North Dakota University System Core Technology Services (CTS) Strategic Plan sets the tone and direction for technological advancement for 2026-28. The Plan is designed to advance CTS's strategic goals, values, and priorities while ensuring technical infrastructure and services fully support the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education and future growth of its 11 institutions. The plan is updated annually. As goals are advanced and completed, they are reviewed and adjusted to reflect the progressive technical needs of the campus's we support. At the end of each fiscal year, CTS produces an Annual Report to capture recent progress and highlight accomplishments. This continuous cycle of planning, execution, and recalibration fosters CTS's engagement with the institutions and increases transparency about the value we provide.

Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles

CTS serves as the systemwide provider of IT shared services and technology for NDUS. Our strategic plan is aligned with the six objectives established by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education:

- Optimize student affordability while maintaining campus financial health
- Provide access to programs people want, where and when they need them
- Prepare students for success
- Maximize the strengths of the unified system
- Advance research excellence and innovation
- Support workforce development

Mission Statement:

To provide trusted technical and professional services to support the strategic goals of the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education.

Vision Statement:

Empower our stakeholders with secure, sustainable and innovative technology, and data solutions built on trust and collaboration.

In 2025, CTS leadership gathered to define our strategic vision. We began our journey by revisiting our vision statement, originally crafted in 2015, and developing an updated version to clarify and articulate a shared direction and inspire CTS employees for the years ahead. This renewed vision serves as the catalyst for the 2026–2028 NDUS CTS Strategic Plan.

We identified guiding principles to serve as a framework for consistent decision-making and behavior within our organization, aligning our actions with NDUS core values and strategic goals. The following guiding principles strongly influence CTS's tactical direction:

CTS Guiding Principles

- Service Oriented: We deliver experiences to our customers through services and empowerment.
- Innovation: We seek innovative and effective ways to use technology to deliver business value, both in improvement of services and implementation of emerging technologies.
- Data Stewardship: We manage enterprise-wide data with a commitment to data stewardship through fostering healthy data management practices.
- Collaboration: We strive to establish trust in our service through collaboration with our stakeholders.
- Security-Centric: Security is a core value shaping decisions, infrastructure, and daily operations. We provide cybersecurity services to CTS and NDUS institutions to safeguard systems, data, and privacy while supporting organizational resilience and regulatory compliance.
- CTS Shared Services: We provide technical leadership for secure, scalable IT solutions within CTS shared services, working collaboratively with campus leaders and governance bodies to ensure unified standards and effective shared service delivery.

Culture and Leadership

CTS fosters a positive organizational culture that prioritizes employee well-being, engagement, and recognition, while supporting strategic objectives for ongoing improvement. Recognizing that our people are our strength, we strive to recruit and retain qualified staff, offering flexible work arrangements and professional development opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, mentorships, and externship programs to enhance workforce adaptability and satisfaction. CTS emphasizes effective communication—both internal and external—through evolving methods and Organizational Change Management, ensuring collaboration and morale remain strong. Leadership development is consistently enhanced through targeted training and mentoring, enabling leaders to effectively address challenges and support CTS's long-term vision and organizational success.

CTS was established to serve as the central IT arm of the system. Its mandate includes planning, integrating, coordinating, and supporting system-wide technology services. A transition to new leadership at that SBHE, Commissioner, and CIO levels presents us with an optimum time to conduct an in-depth review ensuring that the right staff are in the right positions. This will allow us an opportunity to design a more holistic and integrated organization, enhancing alignment and collaboration across all areas. These changes will ensure greater consistency in processes and practices for both staff and campuses, strengthening CTS's ability to deliver reliable services and support to the NDUS community.

Organizational Direction

SWOT Analysis

In 2025, CTS convened a series of strategic planning sessions focused on charting a clear course for the upcoming three years. A central element of these sessions was a comprehensive SWOT analysis, which helped participants evaluate the organization's current position and future opportunities.

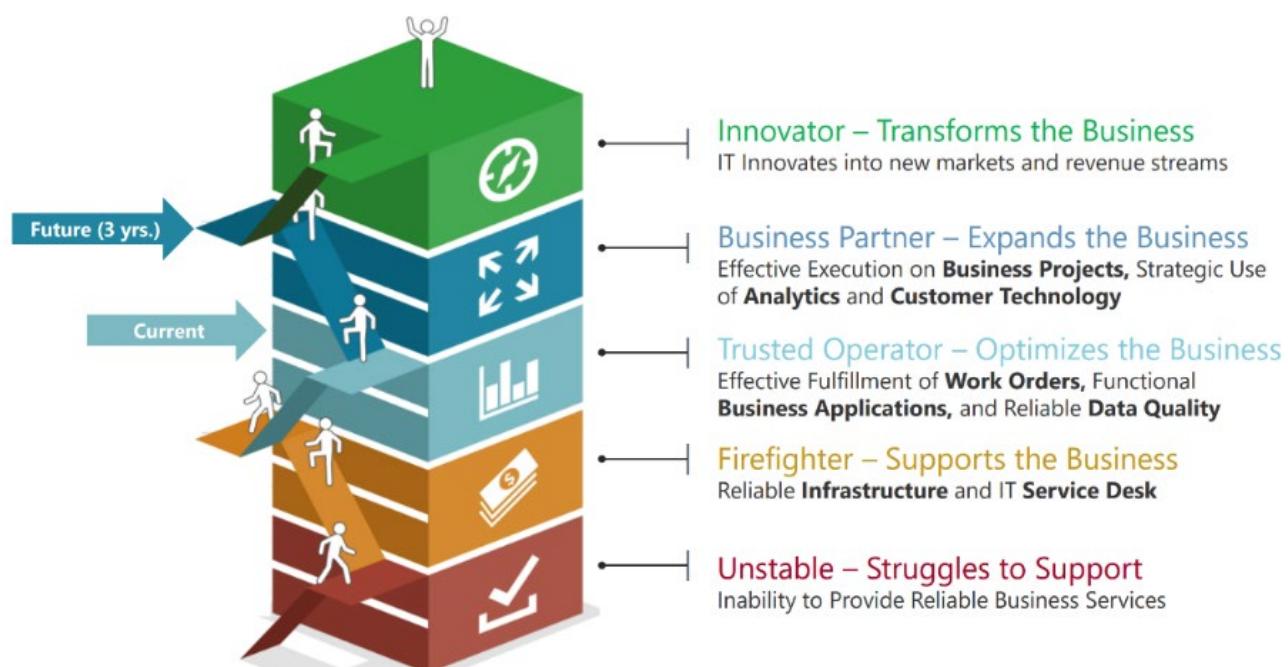
Strengths identified included CTS's robust private cloud infrastructure, commitment to security, and a strong culture of service and collaboration. Weaknesses centered on the need for more agile responses to emerging technology trends and continued improvements in compliance and workforce development. Opportunities highlighted during the retreat encompassed the modernization of core systems (such as ERP, device management, and business intelligence), greater adoption of advanced cybersecurity strategies, and enhanced data governance. Threats discussed included the rapidly evolving landscape of cybersecurity risks, the challenge of maintaining operational excellence across a diverse set of campuses, and the need to stay ahead of technology disruptions.

The insights from the SWOT analysis informed the refinement of key initiatives outlined in the CTS roadmap, ensuring alignment with NDUS's strategic objectives and reinforcing the collaborative partnership between CTS and campus stakeholders. These planning sessions established a solid foundation for ongoing progress, accountability, and transparent communication as CTS advances its mission.



Current vs Future State

As part of our continued strategic planning efforts, CTS partnered with Info-Tech Research Group for a dedicated workshop aimed at strengthening our approach for the next three to five years. Info-Tech Research Group is a leading global research and advisory firm specializing in providing practical, data-driven insights, frameworks, and consulting services for IT management and strategy. During this session, Info-Tech facilitated a series of collaborative activities designed to clarify our organizational priorities and further develop actionable initiatives that align with NDUS's strategic objectives.



During the planning sessions, a visual titled “Current and Desired Future State” was presented to show CTS’s existing organizational structure and service offerings next to its goals for a future that is more integrated, flexible, and focused on delivering excellent service.

Participants engaged in in-depth discussions, leveraging industry best practices and frameworks provided by Info-Tech to supplement our internal SWOT analysis and refine our roadmap. This engagement not only validated our ongoing initiatives—such as modernization of core systems, cybersecurity enhancement, and data governance—but also provided new perspectives and tools for tackling emerging technology trends and operational challenges. The workshop reinforced our commitment to continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, and transparent communication, ensuring CTS remains agile and responsive in a rapidly evolving environment.

Goals and Objectives

The CTS leadership team conducted a comprehensive evaluation of our organizational goals and objectives. Following those discussions, the IT goals outlined below were established:

- Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT operational excellence
- Support IT innovation and emerging technologies
- Advance workforce agility and adaptability
- Cybersecurity maturity
- Optimize and reduce costs

The leadership team then determined that current and future initiatives will be organized into three primary categories: business support, IT excellence, and innovation.

Expanding System Functionality

CTS delivers comprehensive support for a broad spectrum of academic and business technologies, encompassing student information systems, finance, and HR platforms, learning management solutions, and tools for collaboration and communication. As new requirements surface and technological advancements become available, CTS actively partners with NDUS institutions to align emerging needs with innovative solutions. The primary goal is to ensure that current systems consistently offer optimal functionality to effectively meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

Automation plays a crucial role in the ongoing enhancement of system capabilities. Streamlining technical processes through automation boosts the efficiency of service delivery and management, enabling stakeholders to receive timely and relevant support. Likewise, automating business workflows elevates daily operational efficiency for staff and other users. To remain competitive and responsive, it is essential for the organization to stay abreast of automation trends and continuously modernize and expand the features of NDUS systems and applications. In addition, the thoughtful integration of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), can further optimize operations and enrich user experiences. By exploring and adopting innovative solutions—such as AI-driven analytics, machine learning for predictive maintenance, or intelligent automation of routine tasks—CTS can proactively address evolving needs and ensure that systems remain at the forefront of technological advancement. These efforts will help the organization deliver even greater value to students, faculty, and staff while supporting ongoing agility and growth.

Additionally, CTS offers institutions the opportunity to leverage the advanced private cloud infrastructure housed within the NDUS Data Center at a cost-effective rate. This state-of-the-art facility is constructed to Tier III standards and monitored around the clock, ensuring reliability and security. The Data Center features a hyper-converged computing and networking environment accessible to NDUS entities, providing high performance, simplified management,

built-in security, and low operational overhead. To maintain agility and dependability in achieving NDUS's IT strategic objectives, all systems, services, and applications are required to comply with established enterprise standards.

Roadmap

The CTS Roadmap outlines a strategic path forward, designed to guide the organization through a rapidly changing information technology landscape. Grounded in collaborative planning and informed by industry best practices, this section provides a comprehensive overview of major initiatives and future projects that will drive operational excellence, innovation, and enhanced service delivery across NDUS. By focusing on modernization, accessibility, security, and stakeholder satisfaction, the roadmap ensures CTS is well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of its campuses and partners.

Major Initiatives

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System Modernization and Implementation

CTS is actively seeking the necessary funding and personnel to ensure the successful replacement of our current ERP system (PeopleSoft). Because our on-prem ERP will only offer limited support in the future, NDUS will shift from using the on-prem infrastructure installed in on local equipment to a cloud-based (vendor-hosted or vendor-provided systems outside the NDUS network) system or systems. The move is required, in part, because companies are fundamentally changing the way they provide applications. Transition to a new system will require significant commitment of resources from CTS and institutions, both financial and people, and take several years, as cloud-based systems cannot accommodate the scope of customizations currently in place for the on-premise system.

Digital Accessibility

The Department of Justice mandated all state and local government entities, including higher education institutions, ensure all digital content, including websites, social media, mobile apps, and electronic documents, conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA standards. This includes ensuring that all web content is accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as those who are visually challenged or have other impairments. Extensive CTS personnel resources are being utilized to accomplish this mandate. Most institutions have their own initiatives to meet their needs in this area.

Service Satisfaction

Providing a secure, supportive, service-oriented environment can have significant impacts on the success and overall user experience for CTS's customers and technology partners. Service satisfaction can be increased by providing user-focused education and training, actively collaborating, and positively interacting with those who are served, and resolving issues and

security concerns in a timely manner. It is important for CTS to regularly engage in dialogue with stakeholders to better understand their needs and challenges and to respond by making continuous improvements to service offerings.

Creating a secure, supportive, and service-oriented environment remains vital for advancing the success and overall experience of CTS's customers and technology partners. Our new work Management System (WMS) platform with a targeted implementation date of 06/30/2026 has been selected as the foundation for elevating service satisfaction and supporting the following key functions:

- User-focused education and training
- Active collaboration and positive interaction
- Timely resolution of issues and security concerns
- Ongoing stakeholder communication
- Continuous improvement of service offerings

In addition to its role in education, collaboration, and issue resolution, the WMS will be instrumental in enabling resource and capacity planning. By providing real-time visibility into workloads, project timelines, and staffing levels, the WMS will help CTS optimize resource allocation across teams and initiatives. This improved transparency will allow for proactive identification of bottlenecks and ensure that capacity matches demand, ultimately supporting more efficient service delivery and better outcomes for campuses and technology partners.

Security Focus – Protect, Detect, and Respond

Having the ability to detect security events and respond in a timely and effective manner is a top strategic priority for CTS. However, our approach to security goes beyond detection and response; it is fundamentally about fostering strong partnerships within CTS and across NDUS institutions to ensure a secure environment. Continuing to mature the NDUS Security Operations Center (SOC) is a cornerstone for growing this capability, supported by ongoing collaboration among teams. Other security service initiatives include implementing automated detection and response technologies, developing the capability to collect and securely store critical security logs and event data from CTS and the NDUS institutions, and working closely with campus and system partners to share knowledge, align priorities, and build a culture of shared responsibility for security throughout the organization.

Information Access and Data Governance

Data continues to be recognized by CTS as a powerful and protected asset. A key initiative is establishing a universal data dictionary, enhancing data stewardship, and defining data governance. These efforts ensure that information remains a powerful and protected asset, supporting both current needs and future innovation.

Future Initiatives

A detailed overview of strategic technology and business initiatives scheduled for implementation across NDUS from 2025 through 2028 is provided in Appendix A. These are organized to advance operational excellence, strengthen IT capabilities, reinforce cybersecurity maturity, and promote both innovation and workforce agility. Key areas outlined in Appendix A include system upgrades and replacements—such as student housing, parking, facilities management, and ERP modernization—as well as enhancements in device management and resource planning. The initiatives also encompass efforts to improve compliance with accessibility and data governance requirements, alongside the adoption of advanced cybersecurity strategies including Zero Trust Architecture, Certificate Management Automation, Security Operations Center (SOC) capabilities, and Quantum Computing Threat Assessments.

Further, Appendix A documents improvements to business support functions, such as applicant background screening, workforce and talent management, and the deployment of business intelligence platforms. The initiatives described also support IT excellence through centralized logging, disaster recovery planning, and network infrastructure updates. Additional projects focus on operational streamlining and organizational adaptability, including targeted training, deployment of knowledge management systems, and the development of robust governance models. Collectively, the initiatives listed in Appendix A exemplify a deliberate commitment to modernizing technology infrastructure, enhancing data security, and optimizing business processes throughout the NDUS community.

To ensure continued progress on these initiatives, CTS will provide quarterly updates, track milestones, and address any emerging needs as projects evolve. We are actively developing a visual dashboard that will be accessible to all campuses, offering a transparent view of the status and advancement of each item on the roadmap. Success relies on the collaborative partnership between CTS and campuses, working together to achieve these goals and adapt to the changing landscape of technology and security.

Conclusion

The CTS Strategic Plan is built upon a foundation of Workplace Culture, Service Satisfaction, and Information Access, ensuring that every initiative is guided by clear ownership and accountability. By incorporating valuable feedback from Customers and Technology Partners, CTS remains focused on meeting the needs of students, faculty, staff, and System Office stakeholders. Through the recruitment and retention of a skilled and dedicated workforce, CTS is well-positioned to deliver reliable, high-quality systems and services to the NDUS community. With ongoing planning sessions and commitment to teamwork, leadership, and professional growth, CTS is prepared to achieve its goals and advance its mission.

Appendix A

Appendix A summarizes the CTS initiatives referenced in this Strategic Plan, presenting each project's name, status, start and end dates, IT goal, and initiative type to provide a clear, at-a-glance view of planned work. This appendix will be updated quarterly and will reflect the NDUS Roadmap Dashboard (coming soon) to show progress against milestones and KPIs, and readers should consult the dashboard for the latest status and contact information for each initiative.

Innovation Initiatives

Initiatives	Status	IT Goals	Planned Start Date	Planned End Date
Implement Peoplesoft Insights for Campus Connection	In Process	Support IT innovation and Emerging Technologies	7/1/2025	6/30/2027
Mature Zero Trust Architecture	Planning	Cyber Security Maturity	9/1/2025	12/31/2028
Migrate to Certificate Management Automation	In Process	Cyber Security Maturity	10/1/2025	3/31/2026
Implement Peoplesoft New Landing Page	Planning	Support IT innovation and Emerging Technologies	1/2/2026	12/31/2026
Quantum computing (Threat Assessment)	Planning	Cyber Security Maturity	1/2/2026	6/30/2027
Document Imaging – Intelligent document processing	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2027	6/30/2028

Business Support Initiatives

Initiatives	Status	IT Goals	Planned Start Date	Planned End Date
Implement Fluid eperformance	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	2/15/2026	8/15/2026
Updated Student Housing System	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2025	6/30/2026
Replace Collaborate Web Conferencing with Teams	In Process	Optimize and reduce cost	10/1/2025	6/30/2027
Implement Applicant Background screening	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	12/3/2025	1/22/2026
Anaplan Implementation	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	11/19/2025	4/30/2026
People UX Implementation	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	12/1/2025	4/30/2026
PeopleSoft Fluid Development Training	In Process	Advance Workforce Agility and Adaptability	12/1/2025	9/1/2026
Establish an IT Governance Model	Planning	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2026	6/30/2026

Implement Highpoint Course Auditor	Planning	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2026	12/31/2026
Revised funding formula dashboard	Planning	Strengthen data governance and analytics	2/1/2026	12/31/2026
ERP Modernization and Implementation	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2027	6/30/2032
Smart Panda Rule maker Implementation	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2028	6/30/2028

IT Excellence Initiatives

Initiatives	Status	IT Goals	Planned Start Date	Planned End Date
Implement Workforce and Talent Management	In Process	Advance Workforce Agility and Adaptability	7/1/2025	6/30/2026
Replace Workforce Management System	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2025	6/30/2026
Knowledge Management System	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2025	6/30/2026
Mature Security Metrics Program	In Process	Cyber Security Maturity	7/1/2025	7/15/2026
Disaster Recovery Site	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2025	12/31/2026

Enterprise-wide Intune Device Management	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2025	12/31/2026
Peoplesoft Archiving	In Process	Optimize and reduce cost	7/1/2025	7/1/2027
Implement Microsoft Purview	On Hold	Strengthen data governance and analytics	7/1/2025	12/31/2027
Website Accessibility Compliance	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	10/1/2025	4/15/2026
Extend Centralized Logging	In Process	Cyber Security Maturity	10/1/2025	12/31/2026
Peoplesoft Accessibility Compliance	In Process	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	10/1/2025	4/15/2027
Implement Resource and Capacity Planning	Planning	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	11/1/2025	6/30/2026
Extend Service Catalog to Include LOB Offerings and Services	Researching	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	12/1/2025	6/30/2026
Identity and Access Management (IAM) Assessment	Planning	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2026	7/31/2026
Blackboard Course Archive Redundancy	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2026	8/15/2026

Datacenter Network Refresh	Planning	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	7/1/2026	6/30/2027
Expand access to LMS data	Planning	Strengthen data governance and analytics	7/1/2026	6/30/2027
Extend SOC Capabilities with an External MSSP	Seeking Funding	Cyber Security Maturity	7/1/2027	12/31/2027
Room Scheduling Replacement	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2028	12/31/2028
Parking Software Replacement	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2028	12/31/2028
Facilities Management Software Replacement	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2028	12/31/2028
Implement Degree Audit Wizard	Seeking Funding	Deliver sustained and continuously improving IT Operational Excellence	1/2/2028	12/31/2028