

FEDERATION OF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS OF OTTAWA

Programs, Projects and Plans for the Coming Few Years

THE FCA in CONTEXT

Our MANDATE AND MISSION

We are a non-profit, non-partisan association of community-focused citizens' organizations and volunteer groups in Ottawa. We work together to articulate, advocate and help achieve a shared vision for Ottawa through cooperative leveraging of ideas, capacity and influence on community development issues and opportunities of mutual interest.

Our Shared VISION

"A vibrant, inclusive, healthy and sustainable Ottawa—at all levels, in all settings, and in all neighbourhoods—achieved through citizen involvement and community collaboration."

Our METHODS

Facilitation of "IDEAS"...

- ✓ **Information**— sharing of insights and intelligence on community issues and initiatives
- ✓ **Dialogue**— fostering of respectful and informed discussion and deliberation on civic affairs
- ✓ **Engagement**— encouragement and support of community organization and capacity building
- ✓ **Advocacy**— articulation and promotion of shared principles, perspectives and positions
- ✓ **Strategy**— collaboration on community projects and initiatives of mutual interest and benefit

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

A Menu of Possibilities for FCA Leadership, Coordination and Action

Set out below—in thematic clusters—are some candidate initiatives in which the FCA might wish to pursue a meaningful role. They include ongoing programs and services, organizational development initiatives and specific short and longer term projects and processes. The dynamic nature of civic affairs also means that new potential issues are constantly emerging constantly, while others can be dropped as they are resolved.

Focusing on FCA Priorities

There are WAY too many candidate issues for FCA to tackle meaningfully—certainly not with equal priority, energy, and focus. FCA needs to narrow its workload menu down to perhaps 6-10 highest-priority initiatives, taking into consideration the following kind of criteria:

- **SYSTEMIC CHANGE:** Which ones can make fundamental improvements in the very way by which civic issues of concern are planned and managed?
- **MAJOR IMPACT:** Which ones are of such scope, scale and reach that they warrant greatest concentration of FCA's energy, creativity and effort?
- **IMPORTANT PRECEDENT:** Which ones have the ability to serve as ground-breaking examples of new and better ways of handling comparable issues in the future?
- **PRACTICAL FEASIBILITY:** Which ones have the greatest prospects for the FCA to make a positive influence on outcomes?
- **PERSONAL INTEREST AND CAPABILITY:** Which ones are the most intrinsically meaningful and rewarding to FCA volunteers, to capture their interest, skills and engagement?
- **UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION:** Which ones are in greatest need of what FCA can uniquely bring to bear, in terms of positive and substantial added-value?
- **REGIONAL BALANCE:** What suite of initiatives will offer a reasonable balance of projects across the urban, suburban and rural landscape in Ottawa—something meaningful for everyone each year?

Leveraging FCA Volunteer Engagement and Support

Even with a short list of candidate programs and projects, the capacity of FCA to deliver on its priorities will depend totally on its ability to engage volunteers to take responsibility for each chosen initiative: raising awareness, undertaking research, convening meetings, articulating positions, making presentations, negotiating solutions, coordinating interventions, monitoring action, assessing results...

There are several major ways for FCA to make the most of its available time and energy:

- Carve out achievable roles to set realistic limits on what FCA will contribute
- Establish FCA-wide working groups to marshal sufficient volunteer time and skills
- Have individual member associations champion specific projects or activities
- Let other organizations take the lead, and provide selective FCA input and support

Cluster 1: Offering of regular annual knowledge and skill building workshops and seminars

An ongoing suite of offerings delivered by FCA or coordinated and promoted with other partners, to share useful knowledge and skills of value to community associations and other civic groups.

- “Community Associations 101”
- “Planning Process 101”
- “Lobbying City Council 101”
- “Influencing the City Budget 101”
- “City Hall Departments 101”
- “Your City Councillors 101”
- “Provincial and federal players 101”
- Others? (including offerings available through other civic organizations and experts)

Cluster 2: Advocating systemic changes in ongoing official processes and practices

Initiatives aimed at promoting reforms and improvements to the way in which governments and their departments and agencies approach the planning and management of civic affairs.

- City Budget process
- Approaches to public consultation and stakeholder engagement
- Management of intensification and sprawl
- Policies and practices for greenspace conservation
- Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) review
- Federal/NCC planning and land development
- Intervenor funding for FCA and other civic associations
- Water/sewer/storm water rates and policy reviews
- Approaches to urban forest management
- Changes to municipal election rules
- Official plan review
- Others?

Cluster 3: Influencing proposals and plans for major and/or precedent-setting projects and policy initiatives

Getting involved in specific tangible projects and initiatives already being planned or underway, to influence their approach, criteria, decisions and outcomes.

- Proposed narrowing of the Sir John A. MacDonald Parkway
- Proposed widening/twinning of airport parkway and connection to 417
- Celebration of 2017 sesquicentennial in Ottawa
- Plans for LeBreton Flats development
- Potential redevelopment of the City Centre complex site
- Proposed new bridge and/or tunnel across the Ottawa River
- Proposed new bridge across the Rideau River
- Inclusionary housing/R4 review
- Others?

Cluster 4: Championing innovative new community initiatives

Promoting ideas of FCA's own invention to address critical needs and opportunities, ranging from simply getting the item on an official agenda to following fully through to resolution.

- Rethink and realign our transportation system
- Establish policies, principles and plans for diversity and inclusiveness
- Build a network of pedestrian and cycling paths/infrastructure connecting all neighbourhoods
- Promote a community-based plan for climate change
- Develop a community character conservation strategy
- Develop a rural vibrancy strategy
- Foster rural-suburban-urban partnerships
- Others?

Cluster 5: Expanding FCA's network of community associations and civic groups

Helping grow the city-wide system of community associations and other groups, and supporting their development, capacity building and partnerships within the FCA umbrella.

- Promoting the creation of community associations to address gaps and evolving needs
- Enriching partnerships among community associations and other civic groups
- Sharing insights, experiences and best practices amongst groups
- Supporting community association requests for their facility and other needs
- Increasing membership in FCA with existing and new associations
- Establishing better FCA presence and representation in eastern Ottawa, rural Ottawa and other gap areas
- Assisting in the establishment of ward councils and committees of community associations where there is demand
- Others?

Cluster 6: Strengthening FCA profile, efficiency and effectiveness

Pursuing opportunities to strengthen FCA as a viable and sustainable organization that maximizes its service and support to members and makes optimal use of available resources and volunteer time.

- Establishing an information service to promote awareness of evolving civic issues and initiatives
- Improving competence and capacity with communications and social media
- Streamlining and strategically focusing FCA meetings, (e.g., separation of "administration/business" and "information and strategy" agendas; adoption of new meeting venues, technologies and tools; and use of new dissemination tools and technologies)
- Enhancing FCA's revenue base, and establishing a formal budget
- Developing an accessible database for FCA information, tools and resources
- Recruitment of new Board Members
- Establishment of longer-term schedule of Board and General Meetings
- Renewal and enhanced use of Survey Monkey
- Rotation of FCA general meetings throughout the city
- Securing of FCA sponsorships and grants
- Others?