

Federation
of Citizens'
Associations
of Ottawa

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FCA welcomes review of City public engagement

The FCA-FAC welcomes efforts to reinforce Ottawa's public engagement strategy. As a result of a Council motion of June 25, 2025, members of Council have been informed, through a memorandum of April 1, about proposals to review and update the City's public engagement strategy of 2013.

Restating the principles from the 2013 strategy is worthwhile, particularly the need to ensure that the public knows the objectives and constraints applicable to each engagement initiative. FCA wishes to work with the City as it establishes a pool of members of city staff skilled in engagement and as it clarifies how engagement activities will be evaluated using metrics understood by all.

To build public trust and make engagement effective and meaningful, we encourage further work on ensuring that online consultation becomes more open and accountable. Allowance should be made for stakeholders to interact with each other. More broadly, we would support innovation, such as use of modern professional facilitation techniques and local expertise.

To make further progress in public engagement, we suggest that consideration be given to:

1. Integrating the internationally recognized "Gunning Principles" into staff training material
2. Strengthening the role of the Public Engagement Specialist in the City corporate structure and increasing FTE capacity for public engagement
3. Advocating for province-wide policies for municipalities on public participation.

The FCA-FAC has encouraged its member associations to contribute to the current discussion about public engagement. Promoting broad community involvement in municipal affairs is central to our Federation's purpose.

We look forward to collaborating closely with City staff and elected officials in working toward effective and meaningful public engagement.

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