

Federation of  
Citizens'  
Associations of  
Ottawa-Carleton

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Fédération des  
associations  
civiques d'Ottawa-  
Carleton

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10 December 2013

Mayor Jim Watson  
Members of Ottawa City Council  
(by e-mail)

Gentlemen and Ladies:

On December 11, Council will consider the proposed Public Engagement Strategy which was before Finance and Economic Development Committee on December 3. Because of the importance of civic engagement to the FCA and to its member associations, we spoke at the Committee meeting. We urged that the strategy for improvement be situated within a coherent policy on the City's relationship with its citizens.

We had collaborated with the staff working on public engagement and, at the Committee meeting, we made several suggestions regarding possible improvements to the strategy. We are hopeful that some Councillors will offer amendments to strengthen the city's commitment to public engagement.

We support a phased approach in implementing improvements in public engagement. This permits awareness to be raised across the Corporation, appropriate tools to be developed and meaningful evaluation & monitoring measures to be devised.

If Council approves the draft strategy, we recommend that staff be directed to report to Council on progress on a regular (i.e. quarterly) basis, rather than waiting until the fourth quarter of 2015 as indicated in the documentation.

As for the FCA, it is our intention to monitor closely the implementation of city initiatives in public engagement in two ways:

- By examining and publicizing progress reports presented to Council, particularly noting whether the milestones listed in the proposed strategy have been achieved on time, and
- By collecting information from our members about their experiences, determining if perceptible improvement in city public engagement has been detected.

With those two ingredients, we intend to issue a global report on the City's public engagement efforts in time for our Annual General Meeting in early June.

We reiterate our support for effort by the City to improve public engagement in Ottawa. As engaged members of the public, we believe we have value to bring to this endeavour. Either as partners or as critics, we will follow this issue with the greatest of attention.

Yours truly,



Graeme Roderick  
President