

***Encouraging, advancing, and providing  
leadership for a vibrant voluntary  
sector...***

**A Proposal for the Creation of an  
'Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations'**

**April 22, 2002**

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# 1. Why an ‘Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations’? <sup>1</sup>

The **voluntary sector** in Ottawa is comprised of thousands of organizations, created and governed by citizens dedicated to improving the quality of life and vitality of the Ottawa community. These include informal groups, incorporated non-profit organizations, and registered charities. They are community and neighbourhood associations, recreation centres, faith communities, service clubs, theatres and museums, foundations, and community agencies. Large or small, well established or ad-hoc in nature, each contributes uniquely towards a thriving civil society for all.

Together, the voluntary sector in Ottawa provides programs and services to all ages in areas that include health and social services, arts and culture, sports and recreation, education, human rights, environmental protection, heritage preservation, international development and philanthropy. Close to 30% of Ottawa citizens (174,150) volunteer their time to help support voluntary sector organizations<sup>2</sup>.

**Despite the scope and importance of the voluntary sector in Ottawa, currently, there is no single entity that represents and promotes the sector at the *municipal* level.**

Wanting to fill this void, key individuals and groups have already come together in support of a chamber-type entity in Ottawa. A daylong community forum took place in April 2001 in which 140 key sector representatives agreed that it was time to move forward with the creation of an Ottawa chamber<sup>3</sup>. As discussed at the forum, the desire for Ottawa’s voluntary sector to form a ‘chamber’ type entity reflects a current environment that includes the following forces of change:

- increasing recognition of the voluntary sector’s vital role in building a healthy community and the benefits of promoting this contribution in a collective way
- local municipal amalgamation seeking an efficient and meaningful way to communicate with the sector as a whole – and vice versa
- increased desire to work collaboratively and seek partnerships
- similar initiatives taking shape in other municipalities (e.g. Calgary, Toronto)
- large scale initiatives such as the International Year of the Volunteer (IYV), the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI), and the Joint Round Tables
- The signing of an Accord between the Federal Government and the Canadian Voluntary Sector, similar to one in the UK.

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<sup>1</sup> Several names are proposed for the ‘chamber-type entity’. For the purpose of this proposal, it will be referred to as the “Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations”.

<sup>2</sup> National Survey of Giving Volunteering and Participating, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> List of participants attached as APPENDIX I

Forum participants acknowledged that similar to its business counterpart, a chamber-type entity could:

- represent the sector on policy matters when dealing with organizations in any sector: private, public, or voluntary
- act as a catalyst in raising awareness and taking action
- provide a link between large-scale initiatives and local 'umbrella' organizations, as well as organizations not associated with any larger group

Moreover, specific to the voluntary sector, a chamber will strengthen the ability of the sector to carry out its work by providing opportunities:

- to foster innovation and incubate ideas
- to network with each other and with the broader voluntary sector
- for training and development
- for collaboration and collective action
- to communicate collectively with other sectors and the general public, and
- To share information and resources across communities of interest.

In order to establish an Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, an organization model must be adopted, an implementation plan agreed to, and start-up funds secured. The next sections of this proposal present an overview of the proposed mission, vision, values and objectives, followed by an outline of structure and funding options, and a 4-phase development schedule.

## 2. Mission, Vision, Values, & Objectives

Mission - the proposed mission is as follows:

**The mission of the 'Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations' is to encourage, advance, and provide leadership in support of a vibrant, healthy, and effective voluntary sector.**

**The Chamber recognizes and promotes the sector and its volunteers working together as primary contributors to the quality of life in our community.**

The vision for the Ottawa Chamber illustrates the results of what the mission will accomplish:

**The Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations champions the value of volunteers and the voluntary sector in our community. It is recognized for its ability to mobilize the voluntary sector, articulate its views, engage in dialogue with other sectors, and raise public awareness about issues of widespread impact among its membership.**

**The Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations is a recognized and respected group that provides input on public policy issues affecting Ottawa's voluntary sector, enables its members to network and share expertise, and promotes partnerships and collaboration. It plays a special role in inspiring and fostering a climate of co-operation, in which its members find common ground around matters of wide spread impact, and increases their ability to further their missions.**

**Through the leadership of its elected Board of Directors, the OCVO provides service to all types and sizes of organizations that comprise the voluntary sector in Ottawa: incorporated non-profits, registered charities, community associations, foundations, community agencies and the like. The leadership and the membership of the OCVO reflect both the breadth and balance of organizations and individuals involved in the voluntary sector.**

**Public and private sector organizations, as well as its own members, seek the opinion and knowledge of Chamber members on matters of concern to the voluntary sector, which in turn affect the quality of life in the community.**

Core values that will guide the chamber's operation include:

1. Respect for all people.
2. Belief in civil society where participation by all is encouraged and supported.
3. Belief in volunteerism.
4. Commitment to community development through citizen involvement.
5. Recognition of the sector as one of the 3 pillars of society - comprised of public, private, and voluntary sector organizations.
6. Respect for the mandate and autonomy of existing organizations
7. Membership-driven
8. Transparent in operations and decision-making, and accountable to its members and the broader public.

Objectives - the mission, vision, and values will serve as guideposts to achieve the following broad objectives:

1. Create a collective voice for the voluntary sector in Ottawa in order to:
  - Provide input that will influence public policy as it affects the OCVO membership
  - champion the importance and value of the sector and its volunteers
  - Be accessible and provide information to the media, to decision-makers (both private and public), and to funders.
2. Provide a link with public and private sectors and other communities.
3. Act as a point of contact for government consultations on issues related to the sector and its volunteers.
4. Keep members abreast of the importance and relevance of emerging trends, opportunities and issues.
5. Share information and resources.
6. Deliver services otherwise unavailable to members.
7. Act as a clearinghouse, leveraging economies of scale to provide members, in particular smaller organizations, with services they cannot afford on their own.
8. A non-bureaucratic culture and the use of technology will enable quick response whenever warranted.

### **3. Benefits of an Ottawa Voluntary Sector Chamber**

The Chamber will benefit the Ottawa community, the local Voluntary Sector, and the Chamber members in distinct and concrete ways as outlined below:

Benefits to the Community:

- **Quality of Life** in the Ottawa community depends on voluntary sector organizations – the Chamber’s purpose is to encourage and promote a vibrant and healthy voluntary sector.
- **Public Policy** will benefit from efficient access to a broadened base of expert knowledge provided by the Chamber
- **Community development** will benefit from the synergy created as a result of alliances and collaboration encouraged and supported by the Chamber

Benefits to the Voluntary Sector:

- **Greater understanding and awareness** of the vital role the sector plays in the community
- **Credibility and Trust** – the Chamber will raise the profile of the sector, resulting in increased credibility and trust
- **Collective Action** – will inspire and foster a climate of partnership and collaboration within the sector
- **Innovation** – a ‘big picture’ focus and the synergies among networks within the organization will encourage creative thinking - best practices and innovations will emerge.

### Benefits to Members:

- **Awareness - A forum to voice concerns and provide input** - an efficient and effective way or members to take action on issues that their organizations can not advance on their own.
- **Heads-up on emerging trends** – whether it be opportunities to further a mission or a policy issue affecting member organizations, the Chamber will work to keep members informed.
- **Ideas, information and resources** - access to a network of colleagues with whom to share.
- **Professional development** - presentations by guest speakers, workshops and seminars on practical management and policy issues.

## 4. Structure & Funding

### A. Governance – The following general principles will apply:

- Broad based Board of 8-15 people to be selected through election, following a formal nomination process.
- Neutral, arms-length body, with no government appointments.
- Varied length-of-terms for Board members will ensure continuity.
- “Officers” will be determined by the Board
- Accountable to members.
- Representative of the scope and size of the voluntary sector. The principle of one-third large, one-third medium and one-third small sized organizations will provide balance and flexibility.
- Input from the grassroots/community level.
- Through the Board, all members will be engaged in communication and decision-making. Technology will be used for efficiency whenever possible.
- Defined mechanism to resolve conflicts.
- Board members must have proven abilities, time and commitment to fulfill their position requirements.
- Priority will be placed on the needs and issues that affect the majority of members.

### B. Committee Structure:

The committee structure will be dynamic and evolving, as the needs of the organization change. The start-up committee must keep the structure simple so that the momentum required for start-up can be maintained. For start-up, the following four committees are recommended:

- 1) **A Board member will sit on each committee**
- 2) **Marketing and Communications Committee:** responsible for awareness goals, to develop the membership and to approach and respond to the media.
- 3) **Member Services Committee:** will ensure that the benefits of membership remain relevant, add value, and meet member expectations.
- 4) **Planning Committee:** will oversee operational planning, measurement and accountability, fund development, research, and staffing.

C. Issue Response Teams – will act as task forces with these characteristics

- Issue driven, finite and task oriented, formed on an as needed basis by the Board
- Team composition will be based on the task at hand
- A Team leader/ key contact will be identified
- Feedback systems will be designed to ensure that it reflects the concerns and comments of small, mid and large size organizations.
- Feedback systems will be designed to ensure that it also reflects the concerns and comments of general communities of interest such as charities, arts and recreation, health care, etc. This could be through focus groups or surveys for example.

D. Membership:

- A preliminary question to be answered is, “What does the Chamber expect of its members?”
  - There should be a responsibility that all members will be required to volunteer in some capacity, and that they are involved in volunteerism in some way.
  - A “Roles & Responsibilities” sheet should be prepared to outline expectations of different categories of members.
- Who may join?
  - Anyone who shares the mission and the vision of the organization may join but different categories of members will exist, such as organization/group memberships as well as individual memberships, and community memberships versus not-for-profit memberships.
  - Government representatives may not vote
  - One membership = one vote
- Members will receive services and benefits exclusive to them, while non-members may gain access to general information, attend OCVO sponsored events (for a higher fee), be provided with referrals to voluntary sector organizations.
- Special consideration should be given to small groups, such as waiving of membership fees.
- Funders and government bodies should not be allowed voting status but special consideration should be given to encourage their involvement in other ways.
- The initial membership recruitment campaign must communicate the start-up status of the Chamber.
- Grassroots referral and work-of-mouth promotion will be needed. Email word-of-mouth can boost the numbers reached significantly.

E. Funding

Once the Chamber is up and running, a diversity of funding sources is most desirable. The ‘one-third’ principle might apply – one third of revenue from membership, one-third from donations and sponsors, and one-third from grants. However, the Chamber must not be seen to be competing for revenue that would otherwise go to its member organizations directly.

Membership fees will ensure a sense of ownership among the members and reduce the vulnerability of the Chamber if it were to rely only on outside sources of revenue. To

encourage volume in registrations, a lower fee for early bird registrations will apply during the start-up phase. Membership revenue will go towards the on-going core operations, while special projects will be supported through grants and donations.

The sources of revenue for the Chamber will include:

Revenue Source	Notes
Membership Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sliding fee scale ranging from \$25 - \$150</li> </ul>
Start-up grants	
Special Project grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursued based on the ability of the project to further the Chamber's mission</li> <li>• Based on membership input.</li> </ul>
Donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsors will be sought, once sponsor guidelines have been developed</li> <li>• The Chamber will not do special event fund raising</li> <li>• Donations cannot be 'in-kind' without charitable status</li> </ul>
Fees for Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD in start-up budget?</li> </ul>

## 5. Chamber Development Schedule

The development of the Chamber will occur in four phases; each marked by distinct goals and achievement milestones. The phases are:

- 1) Assessing Interest, Needs and Purpose
- 2) Start-up
- 3) Growth
- 4) Maturity

The following table outlines the 4-phase development plan:

### Development Plan:

PHASE	GOALS	PROCESS	TIME SPAN	MILESTONE	STATUS
1) Assessing Interest, Needs, Purpose	Gauge level of interest and support within the sector	Initial impetus sparked and championed by key leaders in the community	Fall 2000 -	Initial meetings convened by Volunteer Ottawa and the Community Foundation of Ottawa with community leaders from the public, private, and voluntary sector	Received
	Build awareness, gain support for concept – <i>Decide to Continue or Not</i>	Invitation to public forum broadly distributed to voluntary sector organizations and key sector leaders	April 2001	Seed funding granted by Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture & Recreation  140 participants attend public forum and agree to move forward	
	Build consensus on purpose and next steps to implementation	Smaller group self-selects to act as steering / start-up committee; prepares proposal detailing plan for Chamber's further development	Sept 2001- Feb 2002	United Way provides additional funding to continue with Chamber Development	Received
		2 <sup>nd</sup> public forum to inform larger group of progress and present development	April 2002	Consensus gained on overarching mission, vision, values, benefits to be provided and governance structure	Complete Complete
				Start-up process established	In-progress

2) Start-up	<p>Create and Launch the <i>Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations</i></p> <p>Build resources: staff, office space and equipment, etc (on-going)</p> <p>Design organizational structure</p> <p>Establish presence in community, seek members</p>	<p>Seek funding to proceed with start-up tasks</p> <p>Meet with local Chamber of Commerce to glean further general insight into the Chamber concept.</p> <p>Determine members, And develop communication plan for reporting back to members</p>	6-12 months	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Membership defined, resources found</li> <li>2. Board Members Elected</li> <li>3. Incorporated as a non-profit, secure space, secure staff</li> <li>4. Start-up team disbands</li> </ol>	
3) Growth	<p>Increase membership</p> <p>Refine operations and services</p> <p>Provide public comment on emerging issues</p>	<p>Develop strategic, marketing, and operational plans</p> <p>Prioritize and begin to implement services to members</p> <p>Outreach</p>	12-36 months	Goals for annual revenues, services to members, membership growth, and public presence are realized	
4) Maturity	<p>Wide recognition within the community</p> <p>Well established membership</p>		On-going	<p>Sought out as opinion leader</p> <p>Benefits are validated and measurable</p>	

## APPENDIX I: Initial Forum Participants, April, 2001

First Name	Last Name	Organization Name
Brian	Tyrer	Community Funding and Development City of Ottawa
Jan	Glyde	Christmas Exchange
Deborah	Blasutti	Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities
Deanna	Barry	Ottawa Chapter CDN Breast Cancer Foundation
Clem	Pelot	Clem Pelot Consulting
Nancy	Worsfold	Ottawa-Carleton Immigrant Services Organization
Grete	Hale	Community Foundation of Ottawa, Leadership Ottawa
Carl	Nicholson	Catholic Immigration Centre
Eileen	Dooley	United Way/Centraide Ottawa
Marian	Dupont	Ontario Curling Association, Ottawa Valley C.A.
Carol	Halstead	Township of Osgoode Home Support Program
Dianne	Gate	City of Ottawa
Shad	Quadri	Villagefest
Louise	Martin	Good Companions
Stephanie	Smith	Big Brothers of Ottawa
Stephen	Grundy	Go for Green
Josee	Bray	Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada
Allan	Rix	Carleton University
Chris	Handfield	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship
		Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Recreation
Ngoc	Tran	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship
		Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Recreation
Pierre	Benson	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship
		Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Recreation
Franca	DiDioinete	Catholic Family Service of Ottawa-Carleton
Roselyn	Thomas	Eagle (Education, Advancement, Guidance, Leadership & Excellence)
Hana	Cammy	Cancer Research Society
Ann	Wardrop	CESO (Canadian Executive Service Organization)
Ann	Snyder	CESO (Canadian Executive Service Organization)
Shirley	Jenkins	City of Ottawa Public Health Branch
Sheila	Jenkins	Volunteer Ottawa
Graeme	Kirby	Distress Centre/Boys and Girls
Nancy	Oakley	Great Canadian Theatre Company
Julea	Boswell	Maestro Management
Anne	Bouey	Maycourt Hospice
Dan	Paré	Youth Service Bureau
Martha	Hynna	Community Foundation of Ottawa/Salus
Karen	Bays	City of Ottawa- Public Health and Long Term Care
Guy	Madore	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship
		Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
Gaetan	Paquette	Centre Pauline-Charron
Peter	Reid	Reid Eddison Inc.
Jean	Vautour	PACE 2000 International Foundation
Howard	Esbin	H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Everywhere)
Lynne	Cameron	H.O.P.E.(Helping Other People Everywhere)
Jane	Venus	Ottawa Public Library-Carp Branch
Jan	Gibbon	Dovercourt Recreation Association
John	Rapp	Dovercourt Recreation Association
Sue	Beaudry	Harmer House
Denise	Mattok	Community Foundation Grants Committee

First Name	Last Name	Organization Name
Jennifer	Cayley	MASC
Gwen	Cox	Minto Developments Inc.
Dianne	Urquhart	Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton
Jane	Cooper	Federated Women's Institute of Ontario
Mike	Booth	Ontario Bobsleigh Association
Katherine	Graham	Public Affairs & Management Carleton University
Susan	Phillips	Carleton University Centre for Voluntary Sector for Research & Development
Al	Hatton	National Voluntary Organization
Bob	Wyatt	Muttart Foundation
Gordon	Floyd	Government Relations of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy
Susan	Annis	formerly Canada Council for the Arts
Jennifer	MacDonell	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Recreation
Margo	Thomas	Faculty of Public Affairs and Management
Paula	Speevak-Sladowski	
Rick	Gourlie	Victim Assistance Services of Ottawa Carleton
Gaetane	Gagnon	CALACS francophone d'Ottawa-Carleton
Karen	Shipman	(CMHA) Canadian Mental Health Association
Kim	Bulger	Nepean Community Resource Centre
Lynn	Bostrom	Queensway Carleton Hospital
Catherine	Mason	Ottawa Lifelong Learning for Older Adults
Margot	Levy	Ottawa Lifelong Learning for Older Adults
David	Simmonds	Community Foundation of Canada
Dave	Peters	Diefenbunker, Canada's Cold War Museum
Larry	Kowlessar	Brockville Kiwanis Club
George	Simpson	Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability
Joan	Cox	The Ottawa Hospital
Bonnie	Gray	Senior Citizen's Service Centre-Rideau
Ted	Ross	Watson's Mill Manotick Inc.
George	Achor	Neighbourhood Coalition for Conflict Resolution
Dorothy	Gray	Girl Guides
John	Saxby	Canadian International Development Agency
Bill	Whillans	YMCA-YWCA of/d'Ottawa-Carleton
John	Campbell	YMCA-YWCA of/d'Ottawa-Carleton
Eldon	Holder	YMCA-YWCA of/d'Ottawa-Carleton
Richard	Plummer	YMCA-YWCA of/d'Ottawa-Carleton
Don	Noble	YMCA-YWCA of/d'Ottawa-Carleton
Laurie	Rektor	Voluntary Sector Initiative Secretariat
Mela	Constantinidi	The Ottawa Art Gallery
Jennifer	Lauzon	Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa
Jodie	Golden	Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa
Gwenne	Goodlet	Friends of Nepean Public Library
Renee	Lebovitz Pelletier	Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario
Tammy	Dibbits	Centre on Governance
Colleen	Ford	Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
Buck	Madon	Dovercour Recreation Association
Shane	Cosstick	National Capital Sports Council of the Disabled Inc.
Charles	Laframboise	Distress Centre Ottawa & Region
Gayle	Downing	Big Sisters of Ottawa-Carleton
Diana	Carter	Big Sisters of Ottawa-Carleton
David	Milan	Child & Youth Friendly Ottawa
Rob	Daly	Line 100 Placement Services Inc.
Dennise	Kelly	Line 1000 Placement Services

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Organization Name</b>
Line	Gravelle	Ottawa Public Library
Donna	Keyes-Hockey	Goulbourn Township Historical Society & Museum
Jean	Brown	Canadian Diabetes Association
Chris	Jarvis	Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management
Jean	Pageot	Leisure Department University of Ottawa
Claude		
Anne	Robinson	Go for Green
Tripat-Naini	Cloutier	Pinecrest-Queensway Health and Community Services
Nyamme	Samuels	NCJSOC
Sarah	Cook	OCRI (Ottawa Centre for Research & Innovation)
Caroline	Cyr	United Way Success by 6
Renee	Pelletier	Heart & Stroke Foundation
Mita	Basu	ELTOC (English Language Tutoring of Ottawa-Carleton)
Sally	Batstone	Elizabeth Bruyere Centre
Barbara	Hogan	VSO
Pauline	Tardif	Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada
Shelley	Goertzen	Kanata Soccer Club
Monique	Doolittle-Romas	Canadian Hearing Society
Anne	Chornenky	Ottawa Salus Corporation
Lilianne	Guibard	Maison Ste. Marie
George	Pike	St. Mary's Home
Nancy	MacNider	St. Mary's Home
Janet	Snyder	The King's Daughters Dinner Wagon (Meals on Wheels)
Julia	Huffman	Maestro Management
Sue	Dow	Kanata Seniors Centre
Patricia	Trottier	Canadian Blood Services
Linda	Capiral	Clearview Consulting
Ruth	Hubbard	Ruth Hubbard Consulting