



Community

Perspective



Federation
of Calgary Communities

Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

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The role of community associations and why it's important

By Bonnie Elgie

There is no doubt that engaging local residents in their community association can be a tough sell. Busy schedules, active families and volunteer fatigue are often reasons that prevent people from getting involved.

For some, it may also be a case of not really understanding the role of community associations and how they contribute to neighbourhood life.

While community associations offer recreational programs and events, they are also the collective voice that links residents with the City of Calgary and other levels of government.

The Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association has extensive experience in liaising between its residents and government, with the 1997 closing and subsequent destruction of the Calgary

General Hospital.

"Bridgeland is unique. The community went through a prolonged planning exercise with redevelopment of the General Hospital site," says Jayden Tait, Bridgeland-Riverside's Membership Director.

More recently, the community association showed the influence of a cohesive voice over a proposed grocery store and 35-storey condominium project slated for Edmonton Trail.

Lori Losowy, President of the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association, explains, "We facilitated a meeting with all of the different parties involved. It gave people a chance to express concerns and also assisted with information gathering. It was a forum for the community."

In the end, the proposed project did not move ahead.

In addition to providing that all-important community voice and dialogue,

community associations are also focused on improving neighbourhood life.

"We have events to bring the community together, such as our annual Christmas party at our new hall," says Losowy.

Adds Tait, "We also operate a facility that hosts community activities and events, and our children's soccer league is very successful and popular. One of the stipulations to joining the league is that you must be a member."

While there is little doubt that community associations do much to enrich the lives of local residents recreationally and socially, it is still a challenge to recruit volunteers and members.

Tait, who is working on a membership recruitment plan to be rolled out in Spring 2009, is motivated to understand how to get people more involved. The plan will focus on an attainable range of goals.

Continued on page 3...

Inside this Issue:

- 2 Federation revamps website
- 2 Federation's Services
- 3 Launch of the Guide to the Planning Process
- 3 Member Feedback
- 3 Role of Community Associations continued
- 3 Connecting with our Members
- 4 Our Members, Board, Staff, and Sponsors

The Inside Scoop

In an effort to keep the stakeholders of the Federation of Calgary Communities' informed of our programs, services and the issues facing our Community Associations, we are proud to provide this bi-annual update. The "Community Perspective" is meant to provide an overview of our activities, as well as provide insights and foster further understanding of the issues

facing our communities. It is not meant to be exhaustive but rather a snapshot.

We hope that you, as our valued stakeholder, will find the information useful in your role.

We invite you to communicate with us about issues, concerns or ideas. By working together we can "Improve Neighbourhood Life in Calgary."

Federation Website Revamped!

Over the summer of 2008 the Federation of Calgary Communities completely revamped its website, making it a more effective tool and an even better resource to our member community association volunteers. The new features added will now make our site more user friendly while providing our members access to a wealth of knowledge, tips and resources.

We are proud to offer the following upgrades:

1) Navigation Buttons on the Home Page - to help you navigate quicker. We know volunteers are busy. By putting the navigational buttons on the home page, our member community association volunteers can find the most frequently visited pages much faster.

2) On-line Registration System –This on-line tool gives our members a complete listing of the workshops and special events allowing community association volunteers to register all on the same page.

3) Services Offered – We have created a new page that highlights the different services offered by the Federation of Calgary Communities. Similar to the navigation buttons on the home page, the “Services” page provides different buttons for each program offered. From audit and bookkeeping to urban planning, organizational development and communications, we have clarified each individual service and how they can be beneficial to our members.

4) Members Only- section of our website is full of resources that will help you as a volunteer in the area of Human Resources, Governance, Facility Care, Volunteer Management, Newsletters, Marketing and Communications, Membership, etc.. If Community Volunteers can't find what they are looking for, they can always send an email to our new Members Services Coordinator, Catherine Halkett (memberservices@calgarycommunities.com).

These new upgrades to our website promise to help our communities association volunteers continue to improve neighbourhood life in Calgary.

“ I AM TOTALLY BLOWN AWAY with what you guys have done... the amount of data you have included, and its relevance is ” ASTOUNDING !!!!
-RCA Treasurer

Please feel free to check it out!
www.calgarycommunities.com

Federation Offers Quality Support to Community Association Volunteers

The Federation of Calgary Communities is well known for our support in the area of Financial Management and Planning Services. Did you know that we have also offered support in the following areas?:

Board support (conflict resolution, compensation (training and mileage), job descriptions, bylaw support and interpretation)

Connecting Communities (e-mail distribution from community to communities, networking events, seeking resources from communities)

Facility Care (fire box compliance, contractor referral, liquor licensing, noise bylaws, AED care referral)

Fund Development (information on funders, review of proposals, letters of support, charitable receipting information)

Human resources (job descriptions, HR Manual, recruitment, Employment Standards Workshop and support, salary feedback, employee/employer conflict resolution)

Insurance Support (Market value evaluation referral, access through Toole Peet)

Meeting Support (AGM preparation, minute taking template)

Membership (ideas on how to increase membership, media profile, referral to membership database)

Programming (sharing success stories, attendance at special events)

Recognition (Milestone awards, celebrating volunteers, sharing of best practices, resourcing Herald Stories)

Referral and Interpretation (Canadian Revenue Agency, funders, Volunteer Calgary, CNS, Employment Standards, SOCAN, CentrePoint, lawyers, newsletter editors)

Risk Management (articles, referrals, compliance check list)

Small project financial support (playgrounds, forums, beautification projects, ice rink equipment)

Tools and Templates (rental form, compliance report, financial statements, bylaws development template, timesheets, job descriptions)

Volunteer Support (recognition, referral to Volunteer Calgary, tools to recruit volunteers)

Website (update, information)

Workshops (Land Use Bylaw, GST, Grants/Fund Development, Employment Standards, SOCAN, Finances)

Connecting with our community association members...

The September General Meeting was another great opportunity for us to connect with our members. After some Federation business and a tour around the building by our host the Calgary Inter faith food bank, we had a chance to really open up the meeting and find out what the concerns of our member community associations were.

One of the common concerns shared by our members was volunteer recruitment, both in short term positions to help run events and long term positions like board members. In response to this the Federation of Calgary Communities has strived to come up with some solutions to this common problem.

One of the ways we have met this challenge is by partnering with Volunteer Calgary. Volunteer Calgary has provided us with a massive amount of information, resources and tips on volunteer recruitment and retention. We include this information in our monthly newsletter as well as on our website, making it readily available to all of our member community association volunteers.

On November 7th & 8th the

Federation also teamed up with the City of Calgary to hold a conference on community sustainability called "get engaged!". This Conference was attended by over 100 guests. Again it was a great opportunity for us to connect with our members.

This Conference also gave us an opportunity to provide our community association volunteers with tips and suggestions on how to engage the residents of their communities to get involved including a workshop that provided information and advice on how to engage residence to get involved through special events and programs. Alderman Pincott was also able to share some suggestions on ways to encourage residents of all ages to get involved in improving their community through his presentation on Street Painting.

As we continue to work with our member community association volunteers we will search for new ways to help them continue their valuable work. The Federation has also teamed up with the Calgary Police Service to provide our members with crime prevention tips and will look to set up other crime prevention initiatives in the future.

why it's important con't...

"I am working with other Board members to figure out how we can simplify the process of engaging people. We need to try to think of other people in the community who are busy and running on all cylinders. What can we do to get them to give a bit of their time?"

Losowy says, "It's about getting people interested in focal points. Volunteering can be as big or as small of a commitment as people want. Our volunteer coordinator has been very good in breaking things down into smaller pieces for people. There are different kinds of commitments. You can tailor it."

Many of Calgary's communities have people moving in from different parts of the province, the country or even the world. Community associations are a conduit to connecting these individuals and families.

"Through a community association, you really get to know your neighbours and work on common causes that impact your day-to-day lives," says Losowy. "Besides, it is a lot of fun!"

Feedback

What our members are saying:

"Great site, lots of good information and I'm sure way more to come."
-Tom Banks
Triwood CA

"I am always happy to have the newsletter. It provides a lot of information."
-Zirong Chen

"I admire the work that you and your staff are doing."
-Fred Hertha
Strathcona CA

"I just want to say how much I enjoy receiving updates from the Federation. Thanks so much for forwarding them on"
-Bobby Jo
Riverbend CA

Mission

To improve neighbourhood life in Calgary by providing services and programs that create, support and sustain vital and representative Community Associations

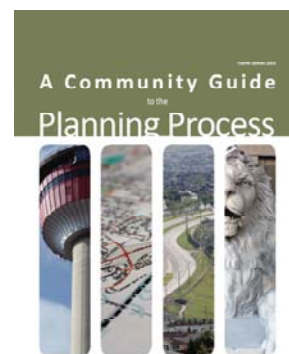
Vision

That each Calgary neighbourhood has a vital and representative Community Association

Values

In pursuit of the of our Vision, the Federation of Calgary Communities operates with Commitment, Integrity and Leadership, recognizing Community, Diversity and Volunteerism

Guide to the Planning Process



The 2008 edition of the Community Guide to the Planning Process was launched on October 1. This was done in partnership with the Alberta Real Estate Fund and the City of Calgary. Updates were made to correspond with the new land use bylaw. A hardcopy is available for all community association boards. By outlining the proper steps and the community association's role in the planning process we believe that this document will make Planning Issues and concerns a much smoother process for all parties involved.

2008 Member

Community Associations

Abbeydale	Mid-Sun
Acadia	Millican Ogden
Albert Park Radisson Heights	Millrise
Applewood Park	Monterey Park
Arbour Lake	Montgomery
Banff Trail	Mount Pleasant
Bankview	Mount Royal
Beddington Heights	North Glenmore
Beltline Communities of Victoria and Connaught	North Haven
Bonavista Downs	Northern Hills
Braeside	Oakridge
Brentwood	Palliser Bayview Pumphill
Bridgeland-Riverside	Parkdale
Britannia	Parkhill Stanley Park
Calgary Evergreen	Penbrooke Meadows
Calgary Marlborough	Pineridge
Calgary Parkland	Queensland
Calgary Rosedale	Ramsay
Calgary Wildwood	Ranchlands
Cambrian Heights	Richmond/Knob Hill
Canyon Meadows	Rideau Ridge Society
Capitol Hill	Rideau-Roxboro
Cedarbrae	Riverbend
Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge	Rocky Ridge Royal Oak
Citadel	Rosemont
Cliff Bungalow-Mission	Rosscarrock
Coach Hill/Patterson Heights	Rundle
Coral Springs	Rutland Park
Crescent Heights	Saddle Ridge
Crossroads	Sandstone MacEwan
Dalhousie	Scarboro
Deer Ridge	Scenic Acres
Deer Run	Shawnee/Evergreen
Discovery Ridge	Shawnessy
Dover	Shepard
Downtown West	Silver Springs
Edgemont	Somerset/Bridlewood
Elbow Park	South Calgary
Elboya Heights	Southwood
Erin Woods	Springbank Hill
Erlton	Spruce Cliff
Evanston-Creekside	St. Andrews Heights
Fairview	Strathcona
Falconridge/Castleridge	Sunalta
Forest Heights	Temple
Forest Lawn	Thorncliffe/Greenview
Glamorgan of Calgary	Triwood
Glenbrook	Tuscany
Glendale/Glendale Meadows	Tuxedo Park
Hamptons	University Heights
Hawkwood	Valley Ridge
Haysboro	Varsity
Hidden Valley	West Hillhurst
Highland Park	West Springs/Cougar Ridge
Highwood	Westgate
Hillhurst/Sunnyside	Whitehorn
Hounsfield Heights Briar Hill	Willow Ridge
Huntington Hills	Windsor Park
Inglewood	Winston Heights/Mountview
Killarney/Glengarry	Woodcreek
Kincora	
Kingsland	
Lake Bonavista	
Lakeview	
Lindsay Park	
Marlborough Park	
Marquis de Lorne	
Martindale	
McKenzie Lake	
Meadowlark Park	

Associate Members 6

1. Bearspaw Glendale
3. Bragg Creek
4. Chestermere Regional
5. Glen Eagles (Cochrane)
6. Springbank Park

Service Members 50

Detailed list upon request

Federation Board

The Federation's Board of Directors is comprised of 12 members. Executive Officers are selected at the first meeting of the Board.

Executive:

Bob Lang, President
John Wakoluk, Vice President
Neil Hughes, Secretary
Bill Scott, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Kendrick Charles
Robin Elford
Christopher Harper
Lisa Homer
Melanie McDonald
Robert Matheson
Petre Rishaug
Ned Shillington
CITY OF CALGARY Pam Meunier

Staff

Leslie Evans, Executive Director
Heidi Brauer, CMA
Bob van Wegen, Community Planner
Brendan Murray, Community Relations
Catherine Halkett, Member Services
Joyce Sponholz, Office Assistant
Lois Fuss, Accountant
Liz Man, Accountant
Sophie Khatkar, Accounting Tech
Linda Lin, Accounting Tech
Elena Ozhog, Accounting Tech
Zhou Wang, Accounting Tech
Vivian Jie Zhao, Accounting Tech
Tetyana Tretyakova, Bookkeeping

Volunteers

Janice Broome, Office
Steve Garcia, Web Support
Luis Horna, Database
A.J. Hill, Youth Volunteer
Donna Lennon, Mail Outs
Loraine Luterbach, Mail Outs
Chelsey Nicholas, Youth Volunteer
Jessica Nicholas, Youth Volunteer
Ashley Nicholas, Photography
Mark Townsend, calgaryarea.com

Federation of Calgary Communities

Improving neighbourhood life in Calgary

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