



Mission

Strengthening the Oaklands community by providing programs, services and resources for its residents, businesses and visitors.

Monday, May 16, 2022

President's Letter to Members, Staff and Community

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors we welcome to this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM). This year, more so than any other, is a message of thanks to our OCA staff and volunteers and of optimism for the growth and reach of the OCA.

This past year has been one of challenges, with both contractions and growth in our programs, with constant adaptation, retooling and building resiliency throughout the association. Without the passionate, hardworking, selfless staff and volunteers the OCA would have surely buckled under the pressures.

The last two years of operations through the pandemic has shown the programs and services offered by the OCA are critical to our members and community we serve. It has shown that the childcare services we provide are absolutely fundamental to the families of the neighbourhood. It has shown that our food programs must be expanded, that there is food insecurity in ours and in every neighbourhood. It has shown that our social events and programs are deeply cherished and provide connection for our community. It has shown that we must care for and expand our physical facilities to continue operations. It has shown we must continue to celebrate and support our diverse community. It has shown that there is more we can do in our role in reconciliation. It has shown that we must work to maintain and build our relationships with outside communities and organizations to strengthen ourselves.

Perhaps, most importantly these two years have shown that our operations are also very fragile and rely wholly on our ability to support and maintain our staff and volunteers - without which we would cease our ability to serve. And for that we are truly thankful. The OCA must continue to reaffirm and practice our commitment to our staff and volunteers who provide these services and programs.

Further, we are thankful for the opportunity of internal reflection these times have provided and to have been able to update our strategic plan. A plan that has been updated with vital insight from yourselves the members and through guided workshops with staff and volunteers. We are hopeful this plan will guide the growth and management of the OCA over the next few years and be a grounding touchstone for all that we do.

With our staff and volunteer support, we look hopefully forward over the next coming months to the expansion of our current services and the reinstatement of programs that had been suspended during the pandemic.

Some of these initiatives include the expansion of childcare services to the newly completed portables across from the center. Explorations of facilities expansion with support of City funding for space planning and facilities planning. Engaging more with our dispersed community through initiatives such as the newly completed community garden at Oswald Park and much more



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community engagement in general as we work toward strengthening our physical connections in this post pandemic period.

When we think about hope and community, we think of our Summer Night Markets which begin in June. If it's been a while since you've attended a market, we invite you back and ask you to bring a friend. We need community more than ever. And our markets are a critical showcase of the diversity, complexity, beauty and hopefulness that is Oaklands.

Again, thank you to those who continue to support the OCA and who participate in the AGM and welcome to those who are here for their first AGM.

Sincerely,

Alex McCumber
OCA President