

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION (1.5)

The Future of Ultimate in the National Capital Region

Long-Term Strategic Planning for the Ottawa Carleton Ultimate Association

NOTE TO READER: This document is an early draft of a long-term strategic plan for OCUA, and is put forward to elicit discussion and feedback among our members. The long-term objectives laid out in Section II were approved by the OCUA membership in April 2006; all other sections of the document are open for revision. Looking forward, this plan will be revisited periodically and updated accordingly.

Prepared by the

OCUA Long-Term Planning Committee
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Overview

The Association has set three long-term goals for ultimate in the national capital region:

- Grow the sport into one played through the capital region by people of all ages and abilities – with the aim of having ultimate played by over 20,000 local residents within two decades.
- Re-establish a sense of community and belonging within our Association.
- Position Ottawa as the most dynamic and innovative ultimate association in the world, and a recognized centre of expertise that others turn to for advice and leadership.

In order to achieve these objectives, this document identifies required actions in 23 areas. These actions are summarized below, and prioritized into Core Actions and Supporting Actions. All 23 required action areas are described in greater detail in the pages to follow.

Core Actions

To achieve our objectives, the Association must move forward in nine critical areas:

- *Membership* – growing our membership numbers requires that we improve our marketing of the sport, and the ease of entry into our leagues. We also need to focus on bringing significantly more young people into the game, and doing a better job of bringing more minority communities into our fold. At the same time, we need to better retain existing members.
- *Community* – arguably our greatest challenge is re-establishing a sense of belonging to an Association that our members consider to be unique and valuable. We need as many of our members as possible to be ambassadors and evangelists for us, talking up the league and bringing in new players. We need a sense of loyalty and dedication that brings forward the volunteer troops who will drive forward change. To rebuild community within a growing Association, we need to move towards new league models that do a better job of matching like players with like, creating smaller communities of players with shared interests and experiences. We need to move the Association away from its drift towards anonymity and facelessness, and make the proponents of the Association more visibly recognizable. And perhaps most importantly, we need to give members a new shared project that they understand to be important and worth rallying around.
- *Leagues* – our structure provides region-wide leagues for all; this needs to be replaced with more convenient local and neighbourhood leagues for our recreational, youth and family players. Skilled and specialized divisions would operate on a region-wide basis, recognizing the need to bring together talent from throughout our playing area.
- *Schools* – our Association critically needs to get schools more engaged in playing ultimate. We need to transform ultimate into a sport of choice for students. We need to ensure that schools, universities and colleges have the support and tools necessary to operate leagues, and we need to better integrate our summer programs with the fall and spring ultimate programs offered by the schools themselves.
- *Youth and Community Relations* – our Association needs to develop better attended and more sustainable youth programs, largely in partnership with the community

associations that deliver the bulk of recreational sports programs for youth.

- *Facilities* – we need to develop a five-year plan for facilities development, based on securing more public fields and partnering to redevelop open green spaces.
- *Messaging* – we need to pro-actively define how the outside world perceives us – rather than letting other groups define us as they please. We need to develop the products necessary to support our message, and we need to ensure consistency in the delivery of this message.
- *Workforce* – we need to re-align our Board towards playing a more executive oversight role, and allow staff to assume greater responsibility and accountability for results. We also need to restructure our volunteer efforts into a more explicit cell-based structure – in which individuals can identify a role for themselves within a framework of working together towards broader objectives.
- *Innovation* – the Association needs to rediscover its pioneering ways, to drive growth in the sport throughout the NCR and beyond. Rediscovering our innovative ways can also position Ottawa at the centre of a new wave of ultimate to sweep the world.

Supporting Actions

In addition to the nine critical areas for action, there are a further ten areas where we need to move forward in order to support our objectives:

- *Tournaments* – we need to focus on delivering a small number of key tournaments; all of which support broader objectives of the Association, such as building school programs or improving our standing in the community.
- *Business Relations* – we need to secure sponsorship and other business partnerships that will benefit our members; but first we need to reposition our Association to be more palatable to business partners.
- *Media Relations* – we need to develop an ongoing media campaign to get out a positive message about ultimate.
- *Government Relations* – we need to strengthen our voice at the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, and improve federal and provincial liaison primarily through appropriate sports federations.
- *Competitive Programs* – we need to bring the Ottawa-based competitive teams increasingly formally into the OCUA fold, and transform a scattered competitive scene into a more structured and results-driven franchise.
- *Player Development* – we need to create a better set of tools for improving the skills of players at all abilities, and make sure that more of our members take advantage of these tools.
- *Spirit and the Player Experience* – we need to improve the overall experience for players, by providing newcomers with a more structured introduction to the game, working with captains to set the right tone, and adopting a new policy for dealing with inappropriate behaviour.

- *Social Functions* – we need to provide better social functions, particularly for our more youthful professionals and university-aged players. But we also need to provide, in order to build communities within our community, social functions that bring together like players with like.
- *Internal Communications* – we need to find more effective ways to communicate with the membership at large. Electronic communications should remain the cornerstone of our strategy, but it needs to be back up with old-fashioned, but highly effective, offline tools – such as word-of-mouth and flyers.
- *Finance* – to pay for our expansionist plans, we need to grow the membership and bring in more league fees. We also need to bring in new streams of income – such as government grants, sponsorship and possibly merchandising – and reduce financial vulnerability by building our retained earnings.

I. Introduction

In 2005, the Ottawa Carleton Ultimate Association turned twenty. The first two decades of our Association have been full of achievement. Notably, we grew our league to one of the largest in the world and we developed the world's first privately owned ultimate facility.

Despite the success of our first two decades, however, the future of ultimate in the capital is not something that we can take for granted. And while securing adequate fields and facilities continues to be a problem, membership trends suggest a potentially much larger issue. According to statistics culled from LeagueRunner, the average age of members has risen steadily in recent years (to 31 in 2005), and the average length of playing careers has declined. And while OCUA's youth programs continue to grow, there are simply not enough young players to replace members projected to leave over the next few years.

Concerns about the future of OCUA inspired members to move at the 2005 AGM that a long-term plan for the Association be developed. At the 2006 AGM, members endorsed three key objectives for the Association, as outlined in Section II of this document. These objectives amount to an ambitious vision for ultimate in the National Capital Region.

Section III outlines key areas of action for the Association in order to achieve these objectives. For each of these 23 areas, the document provides background data, a synopsis of key issues, specific long-term objectives for that area, and new initiatives required to achieve those objectives. This document does not attempt to define these initiatives in any detail, or dictate how they should be implemented. Ultimately, each initiative will happen if volunteers within the Association take ownership of the task at hand and make it happen. Accordingly, the design and development of these initiatives will rest with the volunteers who make them happen.

II. Long-Term Objectives for Ultimate in the National Capital Region

To plan the future of ultimate in the NCR, the Committee began by imagining what the sport might strive to become in a generation's time, recognizing that change typically happens incrementally. The Committee's proposal features three long-term objectives for OCUA:

1. Transform ultimate into a sport widely played throughout the national capital region by people of all ages and levels of ability.
2. Recapture the unique sense of community, excitement and spirit that characterized both OCUA and ultimate in their early years.
3. Create the most dynamic and innovative ultimate association in the world.

These objectives are outlined below in more detail. They all flow out of a desire to share and further improve the unique qualities of the sport.

These qualities are well known to most players. Ultimate is one of the few team sports open to players of all ages and skill levels; one of the few that enables men and women, or parents and children, to play alongside one other – and each to their full potential. Ultimate is often a sport that values spirit, honour and respect as much as it values skill and ability. It is a sport that can naturally build a sense of community – in an age when many traditional activities and social bonds are in decline.

The qualities described above are what brought many of us to the game in the first place, and what have kept many of us playing much longer than we might have otherwise. When planning for the long-term, we will focus on three objectives that strengthen these qualities and share them with a wider population.

1. Transform ultimate into a sport played widely throughout the National Capital Region by people of all ages and levels of ability.

The first long-term objective of our Association is to share the sport with many more people, who play for longer periods, across the National Capital Region.

OCUA currently has approximately 4,500 active members – primarily young professionals living in the urban core of Ottawa. It is estimated that 1,500 children play ultimate for some part of each year at local schools. Within a generation, the Committee envisions substantial growth in these numbers: to perhaps 20,000 players or more.

Growth is essential to OCUA for two key reasons:

- Today's youth must form the next generation of OCUA members. Currently, the ratio of adults to youth (including school programs) playing ultimate in Ottawa is estimated at 3:1 (OCUA's ratio is 20:1). Simply put, to ensure that OCUA continues to thrive in 20 years' time, we must invert this ratio. We need to build an Association with an adult-to-youth ratio closer to the 1:4 figure typical of soccer and other popular recreational sports. We also need more youth players because allocations of new public fields tend to be heavily skewed towards sports and leagues that are seen to cater to youth.

- Second, ultimate in the NCR needs to reach a critical mass, so that we are able to gain political clout and attract sponsorship dollars. We must grow out of our current status of fringe sport to exert more influence. As OCUA's membership grows, the sport will become better understood and more widely recognized by the public.

To achieve this growth objective, we will, first and foremost, have to bring significantly more youth into the game, primarily through increasing our presence in schools. We will also have to spread geographically beyond our Central-South Ottawa base, and make the league more convenient to players in the eastern, western and northern areas of the national capital region. In addition, we will have to find ways to make the sport more accessible for new and continuing older players and create opportunities for families to play together. We will also have to do a better job attracting more of the younger young professionals – lowering the average age of our new recruit from the current age of twenty-seven.

Achieving our growth objectives is entirely manageable – an indicative growth model for increasing our adult and youth numbers is provided in the Annex. This growth model details the net annual growth required, and the implications for new facilities. In essence, this objective calls for net annual growth in our adult summer programs of about 2.5 percent per year, growing the Association to 7,500 adult members by 2025. This would require the Association to secure, on average, one-and-a-half new fields each year. It also calls for accelerated growth of 18 percent per year in our youth summer programs – requiring, on average, two new fields per year – and growth of 12 percent per year in fall ultimate played in middle and high schools. Fields for the vast majority of school-based ultimate would come from the schools themselves. The increase in fall school play would extend the sport to 15,000 youth players (who would become associate members of OCUA) by 2025, with no requirement for new fields.

2. Recapture the unique sense of community, excitement and spirit that characterized both OCUA and ultimate in their early years.

Our second long-term objective is to rekindle a unique sense of community among ultimate players in the National Capital Region.

An engaged and closely-knit community of players built ultimate in Ottawa. It was a strong community that united to design, finance and eventually build Ultimate Parks Inc – a remarkable feat for an amateur sports association run by volunteers. As the League started to grow rapidly in the late 1990s, this sense of community diminished. Our long-term objective is to recapture the spirit, camaraderie and ethic of the early days and to remake ultimate into a uniquely engaged and inclusive urban community.

This objective is important for two reasons:

- First, the unique character of ultimate is a key factor in attracting new players to OCUA and in retaining them for longer periods. By failing to adequately promote spirit on the field, and offer social opportunities and a sense of community off the field, we also fail to provide some of the key qualities that drew many people to ultimate.
- Second, an engaged membership is essential to the advancement and growth of ultimate in the region. Without motivated volunteers willing to step up and take responsibility, OCUA cannot move forward on its priorities.

To achieve this goal, we must identify and implement ways to improve the general level of spirit throughout OCUA. We must provide more attractive social functions, and foster a sense

of community within OCUA—perhaps, for instance, by forming leagues based on neighbourhood, and player age, gender or skill level. Finally, we must also play a more prominent role in the broader community through fundraising activities and community initiatives.

3. Create the most dynamic and innovative ultimate association in the world.

The third objective of our long-term vision is to reassume our position as the most dynamic and innovative ultimate association in the world.

During the 1990s, OCUA was widely considered a leader in the sport, both on and off the field. We engineered rapid growth in our numbers – raising the profile of the sport – and, uniquely, pioneered the development of UPI. Our long-term objective is to re-assume this position of national and international leadership, and to re-establish Ottawa as a centre of expertise for ultimate.

This objective is important for two reasons:

- First, a valuable opportunity exists. No other group has managed to replicate OCUA's success, and no other group has implemented a better model for the development and administration of ultimate. OCUA is well positioned to grow ultimate not only in the NCR, but also across Canada and overseas. OCUA's mandate includes the promotion of ultimate, and, due to our experience and achievements, we have a unique ability to serve in this role.
- Second, re-establishing Ottawa as a centre of expertise for ultimate will significantly increase our influence locally, and improve our ability to secure facilities and establish partnerships with government, community and business groups.

To achieve this objective, we must re-discover our pioneering ways. For the 21st century, this means we will have to identify innovative approaches to facilities development, such as through public-private partnerships, and other joint ventures. To help fund additional programs and services, we must pioneer new ways to generate revenue. We must establish new partnerships with government, business and community partners. Although core partnerships with school boards would be a pre-requisite to growing ultimate in local schools, we must also identify potential partners in other disciplines, such as health care, immigrant services and charities, to name but a few. Finally, we must also identify and promote alternative forms of play – such as neighbourhood leagues that cater to families.

III. Key Areas for Action

In order to achieve the three long-term objectives, the Association needs to address challenges in 23 critical areas.

The areas can be grouped into four broad themes – Who We Are, What We Do, How We Engage, and How We Operate. These areas are listed below and outlined in more detail in the following pages.

A. Who We Are

1. Membership
2. Community

B. What We Do

3. Leagues
4. Ultimate Parks Inc. and Other Facilities
5. Tournaments
6. Competitive Programs
7. Youth Programs
8. Player Development
9. Spirit of the Game and the Player Experience
10. Social Functions

C. How We Engage

11. Core Messages
12. Government Relations
13. Business Relations
14. Community Relations
15. Education Partners
16. Media Relations
17. Relations with Sports Federations
18. Other Disc Sports

D. How We Operate

19. Governance & Administration
20. Volunteers
21. Internal Communications
22. Innovation
23. Finance

For each of these 23 topics, the document provides background data, key issues, long-term objectives, and, most importantly, initiatives required in that area to realize our three objectives. While we can identify what needs to be done, the willingness of our members to take responsibility for specific initiatives will determine whether they get done or not. On their own, our volunteer Board and two-person staff are simply unable to advance more than a handful of these initiatives.

We need volunteers to come forward for each of the initiatives outlined in the following pages. Initiatives with no names attached are awaiting volunteer engagement. Members are encouraged to propose initiatives in addition to those listed below.

A. WHO WE ARE

1. MEMBERSHIP

Background:

OCUA is an Association primarily of adults: our average age is 31, and the average age of our new recruits is 27. The ratio of adults to youth in OCUA is approximately 20:1, in sharp contrast to the 1:4 figure typical of soccer and other popular recreational team sports. Our Association tends to be young, urban and professional, and less ethnically diverse than the Canadian population as a whole.

Issues:

There are four main issues related to our membership profile:

1. The concentration of members in the 27-35 age range means that we are failing to attract a number of potential players even in our *core* adult market – specifically, younger young professionals in the 22-27 age bracket and active adults in the 35+ bracket. Our inability to capture core markets is indicative of a broader failure to effectively market both the sport and our Association to the general public. It also reflects the difficulty that newcomers face in joining teams and leagues that match with their skills, needs and availability.
2. A lack of youth and school-aged players means that we are not building the next generation of ultimate players in the national capital region; furthermore, the lack of youth in our Association puts us at a disadvantage in terms of public field allocations.
3. Our members are starting to play the game at a late age, and as a result stay with ultimate for shorter periods and with less frequency than if they started earlier. This in turn leads to a high turnover among our members, limited dedication to the sport, and a weakening of the Association's social bonds.
4. Our membership is too narrowly cast in terms of ethnic, linguistic and income diversity, which is preventing the growth of ultimate in our region.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has four long-term objectives in addressing the issues in our membership profile:

1. Improve our marketing and ease-of-entry into the Association with an emphasis on promoting ultimate as a life-long sport accessible to youth, young professionals, adults and entire families from all backgrounds.
2. Bring significantly more young people into the sport, and move towards an adult to youth ratio that is more consistent with other major sports.
3. Ensure better retention of our players, keeping our members playing longer.

4. Shift the profile of the OCUA population to better mirror the diversity of the Canadian population overall.

Call to Action:

In order to achieve both our overall and membership-specific objectives for ultimate in Ottawa, OCUA needs to implement a set of initiatives related to membership, as broadly outlined below. (Note: existing programs that work effectively and require no major enhancements are not included in this list but are assumed to continue.)

These new initiatives will only happen with the efforts of volunteers; if you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative that you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca. Initiatives that have no name listed under Team Leader are awaiting volunteer leadership.

MEMBERSHIP: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Promoting Life-Long Participation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a pro-active marketing campaign to promote ultimate and OCUA among our target markets. • Create a social league with individual-based registration, geared to young professionals. • Provide opportunities for 35+ adults to play in Masters’ and family-based neighbourhood leagues. 	<i>See Section C: How We Engage</i>
	<i>See Section 3: Leagues</i>
	<i>See Section 3: Leagues</i>
Engaging Youth	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve our youth programs. • Improve our school training and partnering programs. • Improve our support to university and college programs. 	<i>See Section 7: Youth Programs</i>
	<i>See Section 15: Education Partners</i>
	<i>See Section 15: Education Partners</i>
Improving Retention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the overall quality of our product. • Design and implement an exit survey for departing players. 	<i>See Section B: What We Do</i>
Diversifying our Membership	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach minority communities in the NCR and facilitate their entry into ultimate. • Introduce immigration support groups to ultimate as a tool for improving the integration of their clients into Ottawa society. • Solicit government funding to help subsidize the playing fees of immigrants and low-income families. 	

2. COMMUNITY

Background:

OCUA began in the mid-1980s as an engaged community of ultimate players, united in promoting a new sport. Members formed a tightly-knit community that offered a sense of belonging and familiarity. Individuals understood that the new Association amounted to little more than the sum of its members, and accordingly, recognized that promoting the sport would only happen as a result of their initiatives. Growing OCUA to one of the largest leagues in the world, and building UPI happened almost entirely based on the efforts of volunteers.

In recent years, OCUA has drifted away from this sense of community and belonging. For most members, the Association has become largely faceless and anonymous. OCUA is now widely viewed as a service provider staffed by professionals and providing a recreational sport in exchange for league fees. It is not widely viewed as an Association of individuals that thrives on the inputs of its members – resulting in the fact that we have made little progress in recent years in promoting the sport.

Issues:

The decline in our sense of community is arguably the single most important issue facing OCUA. When the members of an association feel that they belong to something unique, they have a passion that is infectious and a desire to move things forward. When that sense of belonging and camaraderie is missing, the organization is treated as disposable and not worth fighting for. There are five key issues that have contributed to the decline in our Association's sense of community:

1. Our members increasingly view us as a service provider, rather than an Association of individuals. As our level of professionalism has increased and as our product has improved, members have unfortunately viewed OCUA less as something that belongs to them and more as a fee-based service.
2. We are doing a poor job of matching like players with like. City-wide leagues that differentiate on skill alone do little to match up, for example, young professionals with other young professionals, mature players with other mature players, or neighbours with neighbours. Communities are built around people with shared interests and shared experiences. Rebuilding community within our Association must involve more than simply putting together people that share a sport – we are now at the stage and size where we need to become a *community of communities*.
3. Our Association has taken on an increasingly bureaucratic structure, and in the process has become a faceless service-provider with few recognizable personalities. In the past, our community has been driven forward by loyalty to and respect for other individuals and their initiatives. In an era when most members can match few faces to the names of our Association proponents, it is no surprise that the sense of community has diminished.
4. Unlike the development of UPI in previous years, the Association is doing little out of the ordinary that members can get excited about, or serve as a rallying point for action. To most members, staff and management appear to have the league operating smoothly, and relatively few members identify a need for the Association to do more. Accordingly, few step forward as volunteers.

5. The Association has not provided opportunities for like-minded members to meet one another off field, that would allow members to engage in shared interests other than ultimate.

Long-Term Objectives:

In order to re-build a sense of community, excitement and belonging to our Association, OCUA needs to make progress on five key objectives:

1. Have members understand that OCUA is an Association of individuals built around a shared interest – not simply a fee-based service provider – and that our success is reliant upon the continued contributions of our members.
2. Build an ultimate players' community of communities, through better matching of like with like.
3. Focus on being an association of recognizable people, rather than a bureaucratic faceless organization.
4. Jointly build something exceptional, giving members a project to put their support behind and get excited about. Annex A outlines one such project: *Ultimate 2.0*, which involves taking ultimate to the next level in the NCR and beyond.
5. Provide better off-field opportunities for members to discover and cultivate their shared interests with other members.

Call to Action:

To realize our community-related objectives, we need to move forward in five key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

COMMUNITY: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Being Seen as an Association Rather Than a Service Provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .Prepare a communications strategy for educating our members on the nature of our group. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div>
<p>Building a Community of Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to a local league structure for recreational players. • Develop neighbourhood family leagues. • Create a social league for young professionals. • Create a masters’ league for more mature players. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>See Section 3: Leagues</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>See Section 3: Leagues</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>See Section 3: Leagues</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>See Section 3: Leagues</i></div>
<p>Matching Faces to Names</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profile selected Association members on ocua.ca. • Prepare a short history of OCUA, including a Hall of Fame, past Boards of Directors, past league winners. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>
<p>Providing Off-Field Opportunities to Share Common Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new set of social programs. • Encourage all our members to participate in sports pools and other community building competitions. • Investigate whether new internet tools, such as social networking software, could be used to strengthen our sense of community. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"><i>See Section 10: Social Functions</i></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>
<p>Building Something Exceptional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement <i>Ultimate 2.0</i> program (see Annex 1). 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 15px;"></div>

B. WHAT WE DO

3. LEAGUES

Background:

OCUA's summer and fall leagues are structured primarily on a region-wide model – with leagues serving players throughout the national capital region for: advanced players (tiers 1 to 3 on Monday to Thursday nights), recreational players (other tiers) and women's. Summer and fall leagues for youth (ages 8-12 and 13-17) are focused geographically – with four youth streams serving local players in the central, west, east and south areas of the city. Winter leagues serve skilled players on region-wide basis with games at a single central location; while more recreational winter leagues are based in the east and west ends. The total number of teams is provided below.

2005 OCUA TEAM DISTRIBUTION

TEAMS	Summer	Fall	Winter
Region-Wide Leagues			
Advanced	96	0	25
Recreational	226	78	0
Women's	16	0	6
Masters'	0	0	0
Social	0	0	0
Local Leagues			
Recreational	0	0	48
Youth (<i>team equivalents</i>)	8	2	0
Affiliate Leagues			
Neighbourhood	0	0	0
High-School	0	0	0
University/College	0	0	0

Issues:

Skilled and specialized players understand the need for region-wide leagues to achieve sufficient numbers. But recreational players, in many cases, would prefer local leagues that are more conveniently located close to home. The absence of local ultimate leagues has had two major repercussions for the Association:

1. Lower retention rates for adult players – recreational players have been leaving the sport and the Association sooner than they might otherwise because of the hassle involved in playing at locations across the city. The region-wide model does not match with the desire of our recreational players for convenience and ease of access. Likewise, the Association has been losing adult members earlier than necessary because we have not provided opportunities for adults to play ultimate with their children.
2. Limited youth development – until recently, there has been little ultimate available for youth in the neighbourhoods where they live. This has meant that we have not sufficiently built the next generation of ultimate players in Ottawa, for the simple fact that most parents will only get their kids into ultimate if it is easy and does not require driving kids from one end of the city to the other.

Long-Term Vision:

With the right mix of leagues, we can help develop the next generation of ultimate players in Ottawa, and we can keep adults playing the game longer. We need to provide recreational players – both young and old – with the convenience of being able to play close to home, while maintaining our region-wide leagues for skilled and specialized groups. We also need to assist neighbourhoods, schools and post-secondary institutions to develop their own leagues (with a loose affiliation to OCUA). Specifically, this implies a modified league structure that provides:

1. Region-wide leagues for skilled and specialized divisions
2. Local leagues for recreational and youth players, based in:
 - a. Central-South Ottawa
 - b. West Ottawa
 - c. East Ottawa
 - d. Gatineau
3. Affiliate neighbourhood leagues for family-oriented casual play
4. Affiliate high school, university and college leagues

Call to Action:

To realize our league objectives, we need to move forward in three key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

LEAGUES: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Region-Wide Leagues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Masters’ League (over 35 for men, 32 for women). • Develop other specialized leagues (such as wheelchair sports) in collaboration with appropriate representative groups. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 45px; width: 100%;"></div>
Local Leagues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a west-end summer recreational league, working with OCUA staff to mobilize players and fields. • Enhance the existing west-end summer youth program. • Develop an east-end summer recreational league, working with OCUA staff to mobilize players and fields. • Enhance the existing east-end summer youth program. • Develop a Gatineau summer recreational league, working with OCUA staff to mobilize players and fields. • Develop a Gatineau summer youth league. • Develop a central summer social league, geared to young professionals. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 157px; width: 100%;"></div>
Affiliate Leagues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a neighbourhood family league in the Glebe. • Develop neighbourhood leagues in other communities. • Assist local high schools to develop their ultimate programs. • Assist local universities and colleges to develop their leagues. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> Neil Saravanamuttoo </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 2px;"> <i>See Section 15: Education Partners</i> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 2px;"> <i>See Section 15: Education Partners</i> </div>

4. ULTIMATE PARKS INC. AND OTHER FACILITIES

Background:

OCUA operates its summer season on 19 fields at UPI, 16 fields at Sod, 3 open spaces and 20 shared rental fields (rented primarily the City of Ottawa). OCUA has access to a total of 48 fields on a full-time equivalent.

Our home site, UPI, is used during a 16-week summer season, given that fall players prefer to play on more central fields when these become available. In part because of the short playing season, an analysis of costs reveals that UPI is the most costly summer field option.

Cost per Game

UPI	\$39
Sod Farm	\$27
Summer Rental	\$3 to \$27
Fall Rental	\$20
Winter Rental	\$125 to \$300

Floodlit fall evening field rentals continues to be limited, although sufficient for our current needs. The stock of indoor winter rentals in the NCR continues to grow, with plenty of options in all regions of the city.

Issues:

There are three issues for OCUA to face with regards to UPI and other facilities:

1. For much of the past decade, field space has been the constraining factor on the growth of OCUA. This constraint has been temporarily removed, and with a more intensive use of existing and projected OCUA-allocated fields, the Association can add new teams within its programmed field stock over the near future.
2. There has been considerable discussion about the future of UPI, and specifically, whether we should invest in new fields or in a clubhouse. Any further development of UPI would represent a major new initiative for the Association, and accordingly, a Committee of the Board of Directors is currently investigating whether expansion is feasible.
3. Given the plan to grow ultimate, at some point in the not-too-distant future we can again expect to face significant pressure on field space. We may need to consider new development possibilities – either as a greenfield investment in a new site, alone or in partnership with other sports providers, or as rehabilitation of open spaces in partnership with public bodies.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has three long-term objectives with respect to UPI and other facilities:

1. Continue to advocate for a greater share of affordable public city fields.

2. Ensure that we are protecting our investment in UPI through proper maintenance and upkeep, and evaluate the possibility for expansion if and when feasible.
3. Maintain an open mind to new development possibilities – particularly within the Greenbelt – that can be implemented with long-term cost effectiveness.

Call to Action:

To realize our facility objectives, we need to move forward in three key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

FACILITIES: Required Initiatives	Team Leader				
<p>Advocating for More Public Fields</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a strategy for engaging municipal authorities. • Create a volunteer facilities cell. • Develop field plans of identified open green spaces for City consideration. • Lead an initiative with other sports groups to lobby the NCC to release greenbelt space as sports fields. 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>See Section 13: Government Relations</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	<i>See Section 13: Government Relations</i>			
<i>See Section 13: Government Relations</i>					
<p>Protecting our Investment in Ultimate Parks Inc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options for UPI, including the development of new fields, a clubhouse or onsite housing (to cut back on vandalism). • Assemble a voluntary work crew to create a semi-permanent tent structure (for tournaments and other events). 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Board of Directors–Committee on UPI Expansion</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	Board of Directors–Committee on UPI Expansion			
Board of Directors–Committee on UPI Expansion					
<p>Maintaining Flexibility on New Development Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to inform our members to think of OCUA in terms of new site development. • Have the volunteer facilities cell maintain a 5-year rolling facilities plan. 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> </tr> </table>				

5. TOURNAMENTS

Background:

OCUA is responsible for four major tournaments each year:

- Layout for Life – involving about 18 recreational teams in late May;
- No Borders – involving about 48 skilled teams in mid-July;
- Mixed Up – involving about 26 recreational teams in early-August; and
- Spirit – involving about 24 recreational teams in mid-September.

OCUA also sponsors two small winter tournaments, Forcing Home and March Madness, and the Beach tournament at Britannia in June. Another local tournament of note is the CHEO BBQ in June, although this is not an OCUA event.

OCUA tournaments are designed to be self-financing; with typically half of revenues covering tournament costs and half being donated to a charity partner. We have experienced declining participation in our tournaments in recent years.

OCUA members also travel out-of-town for tournaments; on any given summer weekend, there are typically about 8 to 10 ultimate tournaments of note taking place across North America.

Issues:

There are three major issues of note with tournaments:

1. Tournaments can have a significant impact on OCUA resources – specifically in terms of the impact on fields and volunteer availability – but do not always do a lot in return to serve the higher objectives of the Association. A single tournament played under adverse weather conditions can do greater damage to our fields than an entire season of regular play.
2. As it has become increasingly difficult for our tournaments to stand out and attract participants, our tournaments have become less useful in helping the Association to achieve our broader objective of promoting the sport.
3. OCUA has no corporate memory around tournaments, and hence, each event organizer must discover for themselves how best to run their tournament. We are not transferring lessons learned from one tournament to another.

Long-Term Objectives:

1. Focus our resources (volunteers and/or fields) on delivering four major high-profile tournaments, each of which contributes to higher objectives of the Association:
 - a. One pursued event that attracts the best ultimate from North America and possibly the world, bringing media coverage and publicity to the Association and to Ottawa as a hub of ultimate activity.

- b. A major charity event that builds our profile and provides a charitable contribution to the community.
 - c. A pursued high school tournament that serves to motivate and energize high-school programs in the National Capital Region.
 - d. A *Community Builder Ultimate Challenge*, matching neighbourhood associations from around the region against each other with the winner collecting prize money for their Association and having a donation made on their behalf to a charity of their choice.
2. Encourage other local tournaments but realign them to be increasingly delivered on third-party facilities with the help of community partners (who can use the event as a fundraiser). But because these other tournaments do little to further the long-term interests of the Association, OCUA's role should be focused on providing operational advice and mobilizing our community of players.
 3. Improve the operations of our tournaments and ensure lessons learned from one tournament are transferred to other tournaments.

Call to Action:

To realize our tournament objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

TOURNAMENTS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Delivering Key Tournaments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a purse for a competitive tournament (such as <i>No Borders</i>) aimed at attracting the best ultimate from across North America. • Develop a multi-year plan for transforming <i>Spirit</i> or another tournament into a major charitable event. • Create a pursued tournament for NCR high schools. • Create a Community Builder Ultimate Challenge for community groups in the NCR. 	
	<i>See Section 15: Education Partners</i>
	<i>See Section 14: Community Relations</i>
Encouraging Other Local Tournaments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a detailed list of third-party tournament sites. • Maintain a vetted list of community partners interested in helping to run tournaments as a fundraising opportunity. 	
Improving Tournament Operations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a volunteer tournaments cell that provides coordination among tournament directors. • Prepare a tournament operations manual. 	

6. COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS

Background:

There are 8 competitive teams in the NCR associated with OCUA:

- 2 open (men's) teams: Phoenix, Firebird
- 2 women's teams: Stella, Scarlett
- 2 co-ed teams: Hammerhead, Big Fish
- 2 junior teams: OJ, O2

With the exception of the 2 junior teams, the competitive teams are generally passed down from one captain to the next. The nature of OCUA's relationship is one of mutual cooperation: competitive players make up a significant share of our core volunteer base, notably as coaches for our recreational players, many teams identify themselves as part of OCUA and use our logo; in return, the Association provides practice fields and, when possible, \$1,000 to \$2,000 to each team to help offset travel costs.

Issues:

There are two main issues facing OCUA with regards to competitive teams:

1. OCUA's rate of return on its financial support of competitive teams is unclear. Because we do not have a better-defined relationship, there is not a shared understanding of the expectations and responsibilities of each party.
2. Competitive teams may produce exceptional results on an *ad hoc* basis, but there is little continuity to our competitive efforts and little coordination among teams to produce the best possible long-term Ottawa competitive scene. The current team-based approach aims for success around a specific roster of players but does little to ensure long-term success for an Ottawa competitive franchise.

Long-Term Objectives:

Bring competitive teams increasingly into the OCUA fold, by making our support and services more beneficial to their success and by formalizing the arrangements for coaching services.

Deliver on-going results for Ottawa competitive teams, transforming the current ad hoc team-based structure into a broader multi-team competitive franchise for the NCR.

Call to Action:

To realize our competitive program objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader			
Bringing Competitive Teams into the OCUA Fold <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobilize a set of services that OCUA can provide to improve the success of competitive teams, including insurance, coaching, sports medicine, sports psychology, nutrition.• Provide competitive teams with OCUA branded on-field and off-field products.• Broker an agreement between OCUA and NCR competitive teams to create an OCUA competitive franchise.	<table border="1"><tr><td data-bbox="992 506 1435 596"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 596 1435 653"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 653 1435 716">General Manager</td></tr></table>			General Manager
General Manager				
Creating a Competitive Franchise <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a competitive program volunteer cell.• Create a 3-year program budget for a competitive franchise.• Develop a formal strategy and action plan for the franchise.	<table border="1"><tr><td data-bbox="992 774 1435 808"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 808 1435 835"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 835 1435 869"></td></tr></table>			

7. YOUTH PROGRAMS

Background:

OCUA's youth programs have had modest success in recent years. With a limited number of kids involved, our youth programs have streamed kids into only 2 groups: younger children (8-13) and older youth (13-18).

Youth programs are based at Potvin in the east end, WC Levesque in the west end, and Lynda Lane in the centre. With individual registration fees of \$75 per summer, youth programs cost roughly the same per player as adult leagues, however, the Association has significantly higher costs for youth programs (with a paid youth coordinator and the provision of discs, coaches, first aid supplies, etc...). There is no formal on-going youth program with continuity from year to year; nor are the youth programs self-financing.

Issues:

There are five key issues that OCUA must address with youth programs:

1. Our youth programs are unstructured and *ad hoc*, and lack continuity from year-to-year. OCUA is not dedicating sufficient resources to developing a robust and self-sustaining youth program.
2. We have not done enough to sell the sport of ultimate as something cool and desirable for youth, such that interested youth seek us out.
3. Our summer youth programs have no connection to existing spring and fall school ultimate programs, meaning that we are failing to connect with that captive audience.
4. Our youth programs do not make participation sufficiently easy on parents, and as a result, they put their kids into other more convenient sports.
5. The small number of participants involved means that we are not able to provide kids with the best product possible, in particular, playing against kids of an equal caliber.

Long-Term Objectives:

Our long-term objective is to develop self-sustaining youth programs for each of our four local regions: Ottawa Central-South, Ottawa West, Ottawa East and Gatineau. For each region, our youth programs would require a minimum of 20 casual players and 20 skilled players in each of four age groups: 8-10, 11-13, 14-16 and 17-18. Accordingly, each regional program would involve a minimum of 160 players (or a minimum of 640 youth players in total). To grow the number of youth players, OCUA needs to focus on five sub-objectives:

1. Provide a comprehensive set of youth programs throughout the NCR with continuity from year-to-year, dedicated staffing and stable resourcing.
2. Change our relationship with youth – so that *they* seek *us* out to play ultimate rather than us constantly searching out them – through improved marketing and a rebranding of the sport in the eyes of youth.

3. Leverage school ultimate programs into participation in our summer leagues, through enhanced coordination and integration.
4. Make youth ultimate appealing to parents, by making the youth programs more convenient to join and participate in.
5. Make youth ultimate enjoyable for the participants, by providing a positive on-field and off-field experience, and by developing youth-specific rules.

Call to Action:

To realize our youth program objectives, we need to move forward in five key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

YOUTH PROGRAMS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Providing a Comprehensive Set of Youth Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a dedicated youth & schools program officer. • Investigate appropriate grants to help offset youth player fees. 	<p>General Manager</p>
<p>Improving our Marketing to Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the short video <i>Play Ultimate</i> (see Section 11) among NCR youth through viral marketing. • Hold demos at schools, involving some of the more skilled players in the League. 	
<p>Integrating our Youth Programs with School Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a contact list for all school-based ultimate programs. • Contact ultimate teachers each spring and offer them incentives for each student that signs up for summer ultimate. 	
<p>Creating a Better Product For Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create youth programs closer to the homes of participants. • Ensure that our ultimate programs are compatible with the federal tax exemption for youth sports activities. • Prepare a better registration package for parents (with a tax receipt, outline of the game, and expectations of the parents and participants). • Create a participation report at season-end for each player. 	<p><i>See Section 4: Leagues</i></p>
<p>Creating a Better Product For Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our programs are of a critical size that kids are matched up against other kids of a similar skill and age. • Identify high-performing youth and stream them into competitive programs or adult leagues. • Create a set of youth-specific rules. 	

8. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Background:

OCUA offers approximately six clinics throughout the year, aimed at individuals looking to improve their skills and knowledge of the game. Attendance at clinics is modest – with 30 participants typically attending each event. Clinics are run by local competitive players, in return for OCUA providing a contribution to their traveling fees.

Issues:

There are 4 key issues around player development:

1. OCUA does not have a structured set of tools for coaching, hence, our player development activities are dependent upon the competencies and preferred approach of the instructor. There are no coaching manuals provided by OCUA; nor is there any sort of coaching certification program.
2. There is a general lack of interest in the player development programs currently on offer. One element of this problem is that instruction is generally offered to improve individual performance, which does not necessarily translate into improved team-wide performance.
3. There is limited manpower to deliver player development programs. With no actual programs to develop and train new coaches, OCUA is dependent upon the small cadre of, mostly competitive, players who have sufficient experience being coached themselves and have the confidence to share this with others.
4. Clinics have not been well advertised in the past, nor have members always been given sufficient lead time before training events. OCUA has not made optimal use of communications tools in getting our members involved in coaching opportunities.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has 2 long-term objectives related to player development:

1. Create a set of tools that will enable significantly higher levels of player development – at all levels of the sport – in the national capital region.
2. Have more NCR players and teams take advantage of coaching and skills development opportunities.

Call to Action:

To realize our player development objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT: Required Initiatives	Team Leader					
<p>Creating the Tools for Effective Player Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Player Development/Spirit volunteer cell. • Create a coaching manual, or identify appropriate materials that could be used or re-purposed. • Create a dedicated coaching certification program, possibly in collaboration with other ultimate associations. • Prepare handouts that coaches can distribute at clinics. • Create videos for each “Rule of the Week”. • Create a learning league in the spring for novice players. 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 506 1443 537">Jessica Evans</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 537 1443 600"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 600 1443 663"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 663 1443 726"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 726 1443 751"> </td> </tr> </table>	Jessica Evans				
Jessica Evans						
<p>Having Players and Teams Use Coaching Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-institute a coaching-on-demand program for interested teams. • Offer, as part of each individual’s membership, free participation in three clinics each year. • Investigate the possibility of pre-game demos for selected teams and tiers. 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 810 1443 873"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 873 1443 936"><i>See Section 23: Finance</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="992 936 1443 989"> </td> </tr> </table>		<i>See Section 23: Finance</i>			
<i>See Section 23: Finance</i>						

9. SPIRIT OF THE GAME AND THE PLAYER EXPERIENCE

Background:

Some of our Association's longer-term players note that spirit has changed: the after-game song has become rare, and there appears to be less collegiality on and off field.

Issue:

A larger league with fewer familiar faces on opposing teams has likely contributed to the changing nature of spirit. Games are not likely any harder fought than they were a decade ago; however, with a diminished sense of community and a lower general recognition of other players, we are less likely to solve our issues at the field. Rather, unhappy captains or players may brood over a situation and file an incident report the next day.

Long-Term Objectives:

We can pursue objectives to improve the overall player experience and according sense of spirit. Specifically, we can aim to:

1. Provide all newcomers to the Association with a more structured introduction to the game, emphasizing both skill development and the unique role of spirit.
2. Work with all captains to set the tone for their entire team.

Call to Action:

To realize our spirit objectives, we need to move forward in three key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

SPIRIT AND THE PLAYER EXPERIENCE: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Providing Newcomers with a Proper Introduction to the Game	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all teams of new players have a player-coach to mentor them through the season and to introduce them into the broader ultimate community.• Make clinics mandatory for new players.• Provide a new player package with instructional material.	
Working with Captains to Set the Tone of the League	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the captain’s meeting to communicate expectations and remind captains of their role.• Write into the Terms of Reference of league coordinators an explicit role to get to know their captains.	

10. SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Background:

OCUA provides limited social functions for its members. All players are invited to an end-of-season party in September. Attendance at this party has dropped to approximately 250; down from the 800 plus who would attend in the mid-1990s. In addition, OCUA hosts an annual dinner of thanks for its volunteers. OCUA has no league-wide agreements with bars or pubs for after-play drinks.

In order to rebuild community within our Association, members need to interact with other members on more than just the field. In this sense, social events that bring our members together are critical.

Issues:

The one social event that we do hold is failing, largely because it is no longer what the membership wants. As our membership ages, we are less interested in attending bars and pubs; and our younger members are not particularly interested in participating in a year-end party with people old enough to be their parents.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA needs to provide social events and off-field contact that brings together the communities within our community. In other words, as with our Leagues, to improve our social functions we need to do a better job of matching like together with like. This means that OCUA needs to start providing a new set of social functions, such as:

1. Designated after-game meeting spots for our university-aged and young professional players.
2. Family oriented events, such as afternoon BBQs, for our older members.
3. More regionally-focused community-based events for players living in the eastern, western and northern suburbs of the NCR.

Call to Action:

To realize our social functions objectives, we need to move forward in one key area, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader			
<p>Providing Events for the Communities within our Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a social functions volunteer cell, responsible for identifying new potential social events – such as an annual scavenger hunt or a dress-up ball.• Develop a responsive program, whereby groups in OCUA can apply for small grants to help subsidize social functions.• Survey members on what they would like in terms of social functions.	<table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr></table>			

C. HOW WE ENGAGE

11. CORE MESSAGES

Background:

OCUA has never felt the need to articulate for the outside world a clear set of messages defining who we are, what we stand for or what we are aiming to achieve. As a result, we have not controlled how we are perceived by outsiders – in fact, we have let others define who we are. Other sports organizations and some potential players have viewed us an opaque organization not overly welcoming to newcomers. Potential sponsors have reportedly looked at our Open Forums and labelled us too unpredictable or unprofessional to fund. Municipal authorities have portrayed us as a group of self-absorbed young professionals requiring only the minimum of public field allocations. At the same time, other ultimate organizations have seen us as pioneers and leaders in advancing the sport.

Issues:

With a scattered, inconsistent and unfocused message, OCUA has had relatively little success in marketing ourselves to potential players, schools, sponsors, community groups and government partners. Poor marketing has contributed to our inability to secure the partnerships required to drive this Association forward.

Long-Term Objectives:

1. OCUA needs to define and communicate a set of core messages that controls how we are perceived by outsiders, and even by our own members. This messaging should focus around three key messages:
 - i. *Sport as it Should Be* – we need to articulate that ultimate is way that sport should be, and in particular to youth, just plain cool. It combines the fitness of soccer with the finesse of basketball and the camaraderie of snowboarding. Ultimate also uniquely requires participants to self-referee – leading to a high level of sportsmanship and respect for others. It simply needs to be played to be believed.
 - ii. *Exceptional and Accessible* – we need to articulate, in particular to the general population, that ultimate is both exceptional – requiring considerable skill and athleticism at the high end of the sport – and accessible – allowing people of virtually all shapes, sizes and ages to play the game at some level.
 - iii. *At the Heart of the Community* – we need to articulate, in particular to our government, community and business partners – that ultimate is part of the social fabric that makes this city great, and that we are significant partners in giving back the community.
2. We need to provide our members and spokespeople with the tools and products required to deliver this message.
3. We need consistency and coherence in getting this message out there. We need to be assertive in putting forward this message and retaking control of how we are publicly perceived.

Call to Action:

To realize our messaging objectives, we need to move forward in three key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

CORE MESSAGES: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Defining the Message <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the captains’ meeting to begin a dialogue on our proposed messaging.	
Creating the Communications Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhaul the design of ocua.ca to support our messages and align the site with the needs of our target audiences.• Prepare a 3-minute promotional video, <i>Play Ultimate</i>, targeted at youth.• Prepare glossy printed brochures targeted at business, community and government partners.	 Kim Saravanamuttoo
Delivering a Consistent Message <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a set of speaking notes for use by all Association representatives.	

12. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Background:

OCUA does not have a formal government relations strategy for the cities of Ottawa or Gatineau, or for federal or provincial authorities.

The City of Ottawa is our primary government relations partner, and the relationship has been less successful than desired. Ultimate is “on the radar” of city staff, but we do not receive a fair share of public fields for our membership numbers; nor are we particularly successful at securing our fair share of new fields coming online. By the City’s own calculations, ultimate is served at only 37% in terms of public field allocations for our size. We have had little contact with the City of Gatineau, in part, because of the language barrier.

OCUA has had little contact with either provincial or federal levels of government, despite the possibility for grants, available green spaces, official endorsement of the sport or integration of the sport into official competitions. Provincial and federal ultimate sports organizations have done little for OCUA or other leagues in terms of lobbying their level respective level of government.

Issues:

OCUA’s primary objective with government relations involves securing public field space with the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, yet we face the following issues:

1. OCUA has no overall strategy for engaging the City. Our engagement is at the officials level – rather than at the executive or political level – and generally takes place on their terms with little leverage for us.
2. The Association is not structured geographically, and hence does not represent a major voting concern to city councilors. Unlike soccer, for example, ultimate cannot be neatly structured into ward boundaries.
3. Our Association members have not demonstrated a strong desire to engage in municipal politics and to fight for more resources.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has two long-term objectives for government relations:

1. Strengthen our voice at the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau, such that ultimate gets its fair share of new fields.
2. Improve federal and provincial liaison through national and provincial ultimate organizations.

Call to Action:

To realize our government relations objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader		
Strengthening our Voice at the Cities of Ottawa and Gatineau <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a pro-active strategy for engaging municipal authorities in Ottawa and Gatineau.• Create a Government Relations volunteer cell that mobilizes members to engage on issues of concern.	<table border="1"><tr><td data-bbox="992 506 1435 573"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 573 1435 642"></td></tr></table>		
Improving Provincial and Federal Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess whether national and/or provincial ultimate federations can provide proper representation for us.• Determine if OCUA needs to develop its own federal and provincial engagement strategies.	<table border="1"><tr><td data-bbox="992 699 1435 766"></td></tr><tr><td data-bbox="992 766 1435 835"></td></tr></table>		

13. BUSINESS RELATIONS

Background:

Despite having 5,000 members of above-average education and income, the Association has had little success in securing business relationships of any significance. For OCUA, there are two types of business relationships of interest:

- The most obvious form of business partnership is sponsorship, with sponsors essentially paying for targeted advertising and increased exposure. But few firms have indicated a desire to engage us this way.
- OCUA can also form strategic alliances with firms in which no money is exchanged, but with the shared purpose of increase exposure – firms raise their profile among our members and offer them some direct benefits; we get a credible third party willing to put its support and reputation behind our Association.

The reality is that, for the time being, OCUA is probably more likely to be successful with the latter type of alliance. Ultimate does not generate the media coverage or have the public awareness necessary for firms to use our Association as a cost-effective advertising vehicle.

OCUA recently entered into an Association-wide agreement with Brick Breweries designed to increase exposure for both parties. We are both approaching this relationship on a wait and see basis – if the initial alliance works, then a future deal involving sponsorship dollars could follow.

Issues:

In terms of improving business relations, OCUA faces two main issues:

1. Ultimate is perceived as an obscure sport, with little media attention or public recognition, making sponsorships and partnering less attractive for businesses.
2. The Association does not have any great understanding of how to secure business partnerships; nor do we have any track record of note. The Association has not made use of professional fundraisers nor have we made any significant efforts to reach out to potential sponsors.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has four long-term objectives related to business relations:

1. Secure a single major Association-wide partner that is: able to help OCUA raise the profile of the game, prepared to make an annual financial contribution to the Association, and offers tangible benefits to our members.
2. Develop a framework for efficiently mobilizing event specific sponsors for all notable tournaments and initiatives. This framework should include a strategy for better leveraging the networks and workplaces of our membership.

3. Have more teams supported by the employers of players on those teams.
4. Work with the business community to provide discounts to our members, serving to increase the attractiveness of OCUA membership.

Call to Action:

To realize our business relations objectives, we need to move forward in four key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

BUSINESS RELATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Securing a Major Association-Wide Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a business relations cell to coordinate our sponsorship efforts, with securing a major partner as one key objective. 	<input type="text"/>
<p>Developing a Framework for Securing Event Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an annual survey of our membership (linked to our LeagueRunner registration) to be able to provide partners with accurate marketing data. 	<input type="text"/>
<p>Securing More Team Sponsors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a brochure that individuals can take to their employers explaining: what OCUA is; where team fees go; and whatever else is needed to help make an employer comfortable in sponsoring a team. • Create a program (a set of guidelines and supporting materials) outlining how local firms can brand teams in exchange for sponsorship. 	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p>Securing Discounts on Behalf of OCUA Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate a program to have our members solicit discounts from their contacts in local businesses. 	<input type="text"/>

14. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Background:

Whatever the sport, community associations are a key component in any strategy to expand youth programs. Community associations are critical for two reasons:

1. Outside of schools, community associations are overwhelmingly responsible for driving the development of mainstream youth sports. Sports associations drive the high-end youth programs, but it is community groups that bring the bulk of players into the sport through neighbourhood recreational leagues.
2. Community associations are highly favoured in the allocation of public playing spaces within their neighbourhood.

To date, OCUA has not partnered with community associations in growing our sport.

Issues:

Our failure to partner with community groups means that:

1. OCUA struggles to grow our summer youth programs. Kids and their parents prefer to join sports close to home and that have the seal of approval of trusted local institutions.
2. OCUA continues to be pushed to the back of the line for public field allocations.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has two long-term objectives in addressing the issues in community relations:

1. Support community associations throughout the NCR in developing neighbourhood-based youth and family ultimate programs.
2. Develop a high profile annual tournament, the *Community Builder Ultimate Challenge*, in which neighbourhood associations compete against other neighbourhood associations in a pursued event (half of which would go to the community association and half to the charity of their choice). The tournament could require player quotas for each team: such as a minimum number of youth and master' players, even requiring a local politician to play on the team. This would be a unique event bringing together the different communities of Ottawa in a friendly competition in a sport that is relatively new to all, and would go a long way in recasting how our sport is viewed within the NCR.

Call to Action:

To realize our community relations objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader				
Supporting Community Associations to Develop Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redesign the school kit for community associations.• Provide community associations with the same coaching services that we offer to schools.• Create a full-day ultimate module that community groups can incorporate into their summer day camps.• Create a community relations voluntary cell.	<table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr></table>				
Creating a <i>Community Builder Ultimate Challenge</i> tournament <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a new inter-community tournament.	<table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr></table>				

15. EDUCATION PARTNERS

Background:

Ultimate is ideally positioned to be a school sport: it is cheap to play and requires little equipment; boys and girls can play together; it provides plenty of exercise; and, ultimate uniquely teaches students about respect, spirit and cooperation. Despite these attributes and despite being a province of Ontario curriculum sport since 2000, there has been modest uptake of ultimate in NCR schools. Of all the elementary and high schools across the region, an estimated 70 play ultimate. This involves an estimated 1,500 students from the total grades 6-12 student population.

Over the past three years, OCUA has engaged a paid resource to make contact with schools and offer coaching. OCUA has engaged with an estimated 30 schools to develop ultimate programs. Of these schools, the majority continue to play ultimate at the house league level as long as the initiating teacher is still active. There are three annual high schools tournaments; each involving about 16 schools.

Of the four major post-secondary educational institutes in our region (Carleton University, Ottawa University, Algonquin College and Universite de Quebec a Gatineau) two have varsity and intramural ultimate programs.

Issues:

Ultimate has achieved a modest uptake in schools for two main reasons:

1. OCUA has failed to make ultimate sufficiently attractive for school staff and students to take the risks and make the efforts necessary to bring the sport into their schools; and,
2. OCUA has not worked systematically or comprehensively in getting ultimate into schools, universities or colleges, and has not provided schools with the support required to become self-sustaining.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has three long-term objectives for our engagement with NCR schools, universities and colleges:

1. Transform ultimate into a sport of choice for high school and middle school teachers and students;
2. Ensure that schools, universities and colleges have all the tools and support they need to run ultimate programs; and,
3. Better integrate school ultimate programs with OCUA youth programs, and university / college programs with the adult summer league.

Call to Action:

To realize our education objectives, we need to move forward in four key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

EDUCATION PARTNERS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Becoming A Sport of Choice in Schools</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a systematic and comprehensive program to educate NCR school boards, teachers and students. • Prepare updated promotional materials for educators and students. • Create a pursued annual NCR high school ultimate tournament. 	
<p>Supporting Schools, Teachers and Coaches</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a schools and youth volunteer cell. • Establish a council of ultimate teachers, offering peer support. • Update “The Ultimate Box” in partnership with a sponsor. • Create in-class and after-school ultimate workshops staffed by OCUA volunteers. • Work with local school boards to sanction the sport. • Work with OFSSA to add ultimate to its set of province-wide inter-scholastic competitions. 	<p><i>See Section 7: Youth Programs</i></p>
<p>Integrating with OCUA Leagues</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications channel between OCUA and teachers/students in the ultimate programs of schools, universities and colleges. • Provide incentives for participating teachers to encourage their students to sign up for our summer programs. 	
<p>Supporting University and College Programs</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the 4 post-secondary institutions set up or expand intramural programs for their students, including the use of a turnkey <i>LeagueRunner</i> system. 	

16. MEDIA RELATIONS

Background:

Ultimate has suffered from low media interest and coverage, both in and beyond the NCR. A lack of familiarity with the sport among the press corps means that they are more likely to turn to other sports. However, ultimate has tremendous potential for offering human-interest stories. For example:

- When the child of one of our members was diagnosed with leukemia, OCUA supported the family by rallying our membership to sign up for the bone marrow registry.
- OCUA recently partnered with University of Nippissing education students to introduce the sport of ultimate to Kenya during a recent work placement there.
- Last year, OCUA donated over \$17,000 to local charities – equal to 3% of our total revenues. This year, upon the tragic death of one of our members, OCUA donated to a \$25K bursary in his name at Carleton University.
- The game of ultimate was the brainchild of a single precocious teenager living in New Jersey nearly 40 years ago. That teenager was Joel Silver – who today is the Hollywood producer responsible for the Lethal Weapon, Die Hard and Matrix films (along with about 70 other films).

OCUA has no formal media strategy, does not produce press releases and does not have a set of identified volunteers willing to act as media liaison officers.

Issues:

Low media coverage has had negative repercussions for OCUA, namely:

- There has been a lack of awareness of the sport, with misconceptions dominating the public understanding of what the sport is and who plays it.
- Fewer new people have joined the sport than might have otherwise.
- Less attention to our sport has resulted in less attractive sponsorship opportunities.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA's long-term objective with the media is to garner a greater level of media coverage for our Association and for the sport, and to ensure that this coverage is accurate and positive, through:

1. Developing a high quality media package in electronic and glossy folder formats.
2. Creating a media relations volunteer cell to prepare press releases, develop relationships with local media personalities, and get the word out.

Call to Action:

To realize our media objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

MEDIA RELATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Developing a Media Kit <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a media package – in electronic and glossy brochure format – including a promotional DVD, background materials on the sport and the Association, media licensed photos, FAQs, story ideas, etc	
Creating a Media Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a how-to manual for managing press relations.• Offer a media training program for inexperienced but interested volunteers.• Strike a media relations volunteer cell composed of interested members willing to write press releases and contact reporters.• Prepare a media distribution list for press releases.	

17. RELATIONS WITH SPORTS FEDERATIONS

Background:

Sports federations exist at a regional, national or global level to represent the common interests of member clubs. Typically, a sports federation aims to:

- Promote the sport through advocacy – notably with government authorities at their level – and information sharing.
- Provide value-added services to members, such as group insurance policies.
- Conduct coaching accreditation and player development services.
- Organize sporting events, such as provincial, national or world championships.

There are four sports federations of concern to OCUA:

- World Flying Discs Federation: based in Colorado, WFDF represents all disc sports on a global basis. WFDF is responsible for organizing the World Championships and developing game rules. OCUA has had little contact with WFDF over our two decades.
- Canadian Ultimate Players Association: based in Montreal, CUPA represents ultimate at the national level. With limited resources, CUPA focuses on organizing the annual Canadian nationals tournament.
- Ontario Disc Sports Association: based in Toronto, ODSA – formerly Disc Canada Ontario – has emerged as a provincial sports organization. It currently has 11 local clubs as members, although neither OCUA nor the Toronto Ultimate Club have joined given that the organization has little to offer OCUA of value.
- Ultimate Players Association: based in Colorado, UPA represents ultimate players in the United States, and accordingly, OCUA does not look to this organization for the provision of services. Of note, however, UPA does a solid job of offering its members the services expected of a sports federation – such as coaching accreditation.

No Quebec ultimate federation currently exists.

Issues:

Other than organizing championships, WFDF, CUPA and ODSA do not provide the services expected of a sports federation, and hence they are of little value to OCUA. There remains, however, a need for common services that further the interest of ultimate – including federal and provincial government liaison, national and provincial media promotion and outreach services, and coaching accreditation programs.

Long-Term Objectives:

Given the limited capacity of current federations and given the opportunity for leadership that comes with OCUA's size and experience, we have two long-term objectives related to sports federations:

1. Make relevant sports federations stronger, by providing institutional support and by encouraging our members to become more active in their governance and operations.
2. Possibly in the future, provide – in and beyond the NCR – some of the services not currently being provided but expected of a sports federation.
3. Possibly in the future, advocate for the relocation of CUPA to Ottawa, in order to do more effective federal government liaison and to take advantage of the resources available within the NCR’s ultimate community.

Call to Action:

To realize our sports federation objectives, we need to move forward in one key area, as outlined below. (If we choose to pursue the second objective, then the list of required initiatives will be expanded). If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

SPORTS FEDERATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Strengthening Relevant Sports Federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify 3 outputs that OCUA would want in exchange for joining an Ontario sports federation; and negotiate with the relevant players to see that these happen. • Task the nominations committee with identifying potential members to run for the Boards of CUPA, ODSA and WFDF each year. 	<p>Board of Directors</p> <hr/> <p>Board of Directors</p>
<p>Providing Services Expected of a Sports Federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble existing materials, when possible, and develop a coaching program with accreditation from a recognized body, and market the program to other ultimate associations in Canada and around the world. • Engage <i>Sports Canada</i> and other federal institutions to further the interests of ultimate. 	<hr/> <hr/>

18. OTHER DISC SPORTS

Background:

In addition to ultimate, Disc Golf and Goaltimate are two disc sports played in our region. There are 3 public disc golf courses in the national capital region (at Jacques Cartier Park, Camp Fortune and in Kanata) serving an estimated 300 regular players. The number of goaltimate players is unknown, but probably amounts to less than a hundred regular players.

These disc sports have no strong representative body in the national capital region, or indeed throughout Canada. OCUA has not taken on a role in representing these sports.

Issues:

There is a natural affinity between OCUA and other disc sports, and helping these sports in general will only help to further the interests of ultimate. However, OCUA is already overstretched in terms of serving its core ultimate market and it would not be prudent at this stage to take on responsibility for other sports.

Long-Term Objectives:

Potentially in the future, OCUA may wish to take on a representative role for all disc sports in the NCR, however, this is currently a low priority for our Association.

Call to Action:

No proposed actions at this point.

C. HOW WE OPERATE

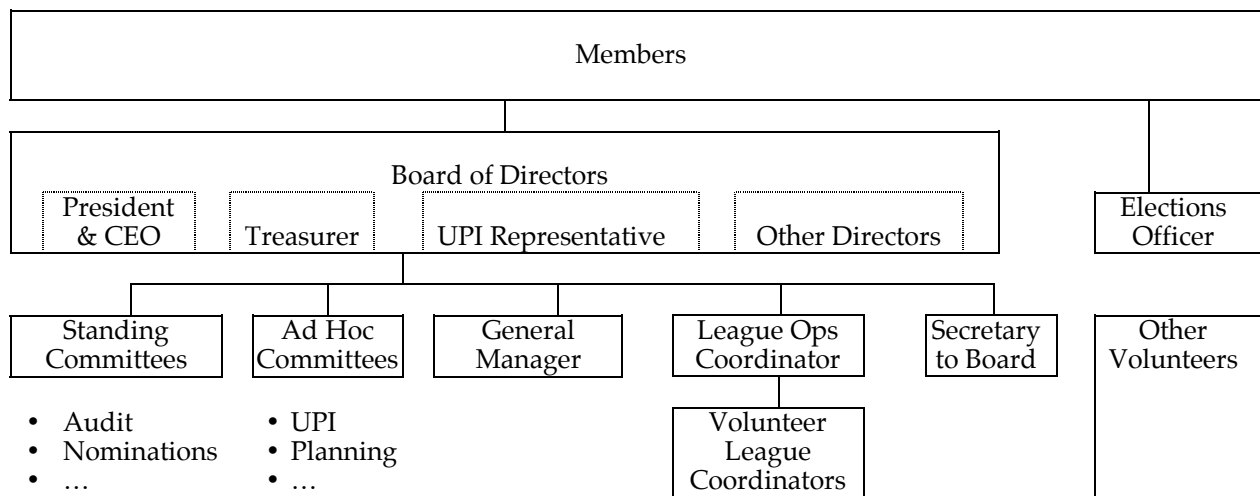
19. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Background:

OCUA is incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation, run by a nine-member Board of Directors elected by its members. Two non-executive staff perform day-to-day operations: a General Manager and a League Operations Coordinator. The Association relies on volunteers to perform a number of tasks and activities. The Association has no office space, working out of the residences of its employees.

While no formal org chart exists for the Association, the diagram below depicts the current structure. The Board of Directors appoints committees, which in turn report back to the Board. The General Manager and League Operations Coordinator each report to the Board. Volunteer league coordinators report into the League Operations Coordinator. There is not always a clear reporting path for Other Volunteers.

CURRENT ASSOCIATION STRUCTURE



Issues:

There are four issues with the present governance and administration of OCUA:

1. Our Board of Directors has been positioned as a working Board, and hence, it is often focused on the day-to-day operations of the Association rather than on the executive oversight role typical of other corporate boards. Because of the workload placed on Board members, the Association is unable to attract few non-players to join our executive body.
2. With the operational focus of the Board, staff – despite being our primary resources responsible for action – have limited authority to act and cannot be held accountable for any operational shortcomings.

3. We have little in the way of terms of reference describing the roles, responsibilities and expectations of our principle agents, namely: the Board, staff, and volunteers.
4. Our lack of office and storage space puts an undue burden on our staff and their families. Furthermore, the lack of a central registry means that critical documents tend to be scattered among individuals, and become highly prone to future loss.

Long-Term Objectives:

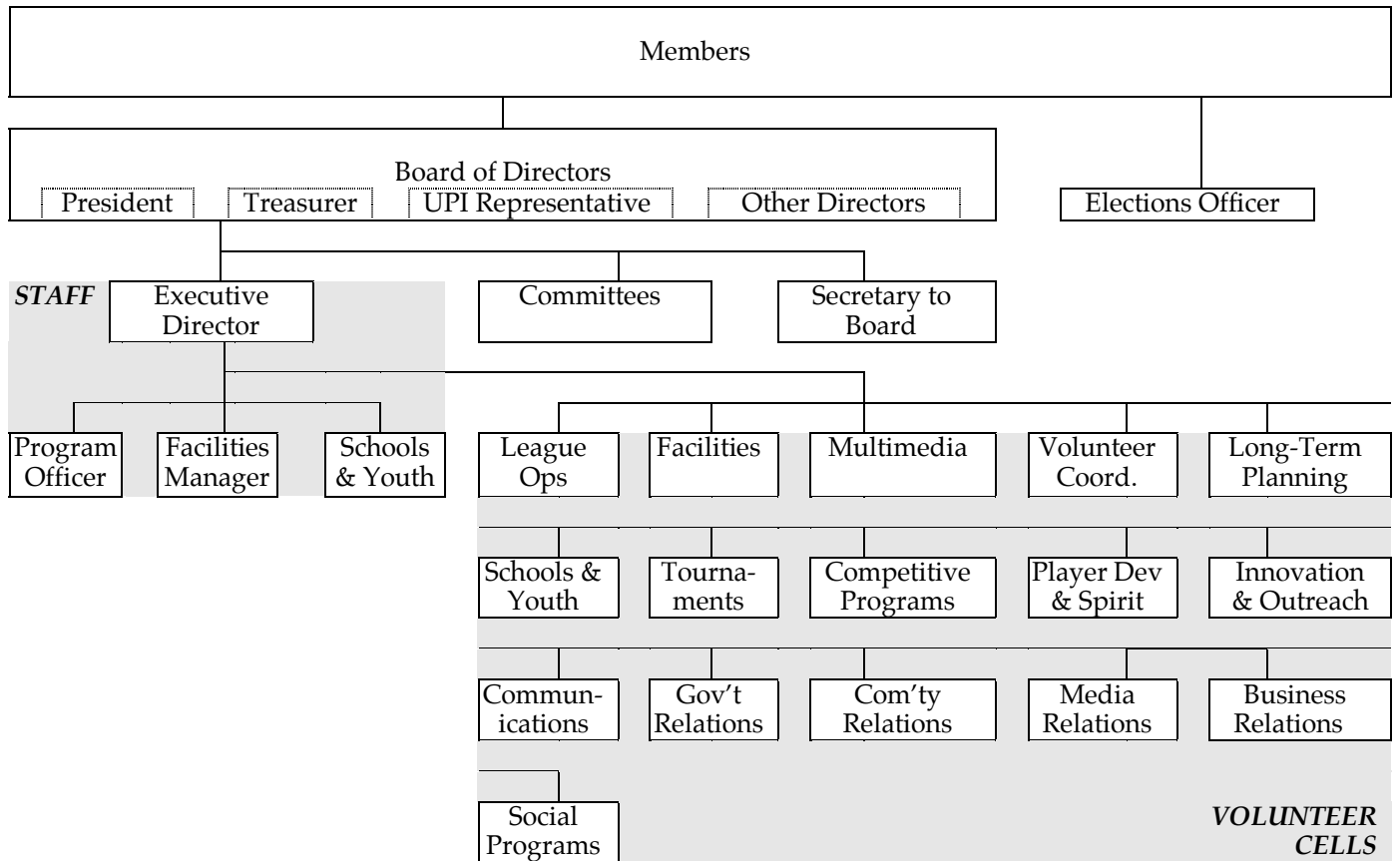
Our long-term objective is to transform the governance and administration of OCUA such that it resembles the org chart on the next page. Specifically, this involves:

1. Transforming the Board from a working board primarily composed of players to an executive board composed of players and prominent members of the broader NCR community. The functional work currently done by the Board should be gradually turned over to staff and to volunteer cells, with the Board's role focused on: providing policy direction and strategy, approving budgets, and engaging in executive networking and problem-solving.
2. Reclassify the position of General Manager to Executive Director, making that individual accountable for delivering on a workplan according to the policy directions laid out by the Board and within an approved budget framework.
3. Create new staff positions (full, part time or seasonal as required), reporting to the Executive Director, for delivering on two mission-critical tasks – facilities management, and youth/ schools coordination. Transform the League Operations Coordinator position into a broader position of Program Officer, and transfer more functional responsibility for league operations to volunteer league coordinators.
4. Create a more formal structure of volunteer cells, with each reporting to the Executive Director and empowered to deliver on an agreed terms of reference. Sixteen cells are identified, corresponding to the functional teams needed to deliver the required initiatives outlined in this document. The number of volunteer cells, and their composition, is subject to change at any point. Board members and staff will sit on volunteer cells as desired.

In addition to transforming OCUA's org structure, there are two other long-term goals:

1. Secure office space for the Association and its staff.
2. Create a physical and electronic repository of Association information, documents and supplies.

PROPOSED ASSOCIATION STRUCTURE



Call to Action:

To realize our governance and administration objectives, we need to move forward in four key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Transforming the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a set of guidelines outlining the role of the Board and expectations of Board members. • Identify the desired Board profile and design a plan for transitioning to that profile. • Draft updated bylaws for membership consideration reflecting proposed changes to the Association structure. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Locating Accountability with Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare/update terms of reference for staff and clarify the reporting paths. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Mobilizing Volunteer Cells</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit individuals to serve as volunteer cell leaders and negotiate terms of reference for the cell with those leaders. • Educate members about the new cell structure and provide examples of the roles that individual could play within a cell. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Securing Office Space and Information Repositories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the option of rented office space for our employees and to house our equipment, supplies and documents. • Create an electronic document repository, for all documents – official or otherwise – of relevance to the Association. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

20. VOLUNTEERS

Background:

OCUA has two paid staff with primary responsibility to oversee the smooth functioning of the Association and its leagues. To take on new initiatives to further promote ultimate in the national capital region, however, the Association relies on the goodwill of its volunteers. The volume of work is simply far beyond the scope of our employees.

Of OCUA's 4,500 members, there are an estimated 150 volunteers that help out with management, coaching, tournaments, fundraising, committee work and other special initiatives. And among our volunteer base, there are an estimated 20 "super-volunteers" who take on an exceptional level of responsibility for new initiatives and driving the Association forward. Ironically, as the Association has become more professional with paid staff to oversee core functions, the level of volunteerism to take on new challenging initiatives has probably dropped.

Issues:

There are two major issues related to volunteering within the Association:

1. Volunteers drive this Association forward, yet very few of our members actually help out. This is partly because we do a less than satisfactory job of communicating our needs, and hence, the membership at large does not always appreciate the critical need for volunteers; nor is it always clear how they can best get involved in assisting the Association in a way that complements their own interests and abilities. In addition, we do not always do enough to ensure that those members who do reach out and offer their services are channeled in the right direction.
2. A very small number of super-volunteers are doing the bulk of the work that moves this Association forward, but these individuals operate with little support, backup or opportunity for peer advice. Often, when these super-volunteers step down, their initiatives peter out. In addition, the Association has a poor record in recognizing these super-volunteers and keeping them engaged and motivated.

Long-Term Objectives:

To address these issues, OCUA has two long-term objectives in the field of volunteering:

1. Make volunteering both special and easy for everyone. Aim to have more than 5% of OCUA members participate as volunteers engaged in clearly defined parcels of work.
2. Increase the number of super-volunteers to 100 and ensure that they stay engaged and motivated.

Call to Action:

To realize our volunteering objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

VOLUNTEERS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader					
<p>Making Volunteering Special and Accessible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a volunteer cell with the mandate to match members and voluntary opportunities. • Define all voluntary positions. • Redesign the league registration system to better integrate a sign-up for voluntary opportunities. • Design better methods for communicating volunteer opportunities to our members. • Identify and promote opportunities for federal employees to use their “volunteer leave” for OCUA. 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 128px;"> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 25px;"></td></tr> </table>					
<p>Securing and Supporting Super-Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold an annual training session for super-volunteers outlining tactics for spreading the workload to others and ensuring the sustainability of their initiatives. • Hold an annual invite-only dialogue between the Board and the Association’s super-volunteers. • Give super-volunteers limited-edition OCUA recognition-branded sports gear (e.g. fleece vests with embroidered name and “Coach”, “Executive”, “Super-Volunteer”). • Profile super-volunteers on ocua.ca and on a UPI notice board. • Annually nominate one of our super-volunteers for NCR community awards. 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 155px;"> <tr><td style="height: 35px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 35px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 35px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 35px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 35px;"></td></tr> </table>					

21. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Background:

In recent years, there has been a common complaint among a subset of our membership that the Board is not doing a good enough job to communicate with the membership. There is a sense that members do not know what is going on and are not engaged in any decision-making related to the Association. The reality is that communications from Association officers (Board members and staff) has never been greater. Board minutes are published; audited financial statements are available; the Board even sends out an open invitation for any member to communicate with our Directors.

Members may have a legitimate concern that they do not know what is actually going on in the Association. While Board meeting minutes are available, how many members can tell you what we are doing in, say, youth programs? Or what sort of opportunities there are for volunteering? Or even that the Association gets a 10% cut each time one of us submits a receipt for a case of *Brick* beer? Perhaps we are not communicating important issues clearly enough or using the right tools, or perhaps most members are simply not that motivated to make the effort to find out what is going on.

There are a number of different tools used for internal communications within OCUA. In order of popularity they are: Ultimate Happenings, our web site, emails to and from captains, online forums, the Board newsletter and our Annual General Meeting. In recent years, offline communications – notably word of mouth – has taken on a diminished role.

Issues:

There are three main issues related to improving internal communications:

1. Focusing our internal communications around electronic products makes sense in a highly connected region like Ottawa. However, electronic communications are not enough to get the message through – these need to be complemented with offline communications, specifically, we need members to talk up initiatives and spread a message through the highly effective word-of-mouth channel.
2. The current flow of communications tends to be too vertical and not horizontal enough. Members expect communications to flow from the Board and staff down to them; rather, we need greater flow from members to members. In particular, we need lead volunteers to take on responsibility for informing the membership-at-large about what is going on in their area; rather than simply communicating that information upwards and assuming the Board and staff will pass it on to members.
3. Relatively few members have demonstrated a strong desire to actually take advantage of the communications tools on offer. If the motivation to access our communications is lacking, then there is little more that can be done to better inform members.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has two long-term objectives related to improving internal communications:

1. Make better use of online and offline communications tools, such that our internal communications are optimized to the needs of our members.
2. Increase the desire of our members to access and internalize our communications.

Call to Action:

To realize our internal communications objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Improving our Communications Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a policy for supplementing our online communications with offline tools, notably word-of-mouth campaigns, and brochures. • Transform the captains’ meeting into an expo and two-way dialogue. • Train league coordinators in how to best communicate important news and events to their teams. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Getting our Members to Use the Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>

22. INNOVATION

Background:

The innovative and visionary Hollywood producer Joel Silver created ultimate 38 years ago as a high school student. Its growth since then surely exceeds his or anyone else's initial expectations. But as the sport approaches its fifth decade, ultimate is ready for a renaissance. A fresh dose of creativity and innovation can take ultimate beyond its status of fringe sport and into the global mainstream.

Issues:

In its early years, OCUA was a major innovator – building UPI and creating the largest league in the world. In recent years, we have failed to continue this path of innovation; instead, we have been complacent, resting on our laurels. As one of its overall long-term objectives, the Association set itself the task of reclaiming our role as innovator. Our status as the largest league in the world – and the fact that no other body is working to significantly advance the sport – gives us the ability to reclaim our role as innovator and fill a void and become the global champion for a new wave in ultimate playing worldwide.

Long-Term Objectives:

OCUA has two long-term objectives related to innovation:

1. Pioneer new approaches and new partnerships in order to drive a new wave of growth in ultimate throughout the NCR and beyond.
2. Position Ottawa as a recognized centre of expertise on ultimate and the driving force for a new wave of worldwide growth in the sport.

Call to Action:

To realize our innovation objectives, we need to move forward in two key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

INNOVATION: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
<p>Pioneering New Approaches for Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a significant multi-year scholarship program, awarded to an outstanding student from a NCR school with an ultimate program heading to a university with an ultimate program.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 85px;"></div>
<p>Positioning Ottawa as a Centre of Expertise and Driving Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embark on the <i>Ultimate 2.0</i> project (see Annex 1).• Develop a set of training materials, how to guides on establishing leagues, and a coaching accreditation program, and make these available to other ultimate leagues.• Partner with <i>Right To Play</i> to promote ultimate in low-income countries.• Assertively promote and make available (in as turnkey form as possible) the things we do well: teaching kits, <i>LeagueRunner</i>, etc..	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 170px;"></div>

23. FINANCE

Background:

OCUA runs an annual \$600K operation. The 2005 income statement is summarized below:

REVENUES	\$ '000s	%	EXPENSES	\$ '000s	%
League Fees	525	88%	Field Rentals & Maintenance	331	55%
Tournament Fees	36	6%	Salaries	84	14%
Fundraising	23	4%	Programs	62	10%
Other	15	2%	Tournament Expenses	17	3%
			Donations	17	3%
			Overhead	77	13%
			Contingency / Retained Earnings	11	2%
Total	599	100%	Total	599	100%

As seen in the table, close to 95% of total revenues comes from league and tournament fees.

In terms of expenditures, field rental & maintenance is by far the most costly item amounting to 55% of total. Maintenance and upkeep of UPI alone costs us close to \$100K a year (or 16% of our total expenditures). Tournaments are essentially revenue neutral – with half the tournament fees covering costs and half being donated to charity.

Issues:

There are three issues that arise from an analysis of our finances:

1. We do not currently have sufficient resources to expand our programming to cover the new and innovative initiatives required to meet the long-term objectives that we have set for our Association.
2. The Association is financially vulnerable, and an external shock could render us unable to meet core expenses. 2005 team enrollments and other revenues allowed for a modest \$11K cushion; but a drop in team enrollments, or a significant bill at UPI, could easily push OCUA into the red.
3. As seen in Section 4 of this document, rented public fields are significantly cheaper than our fields at UPI. Because of this investment, OCUA spends relatively more on fields and less on programs and staff than do sports that rely primarily on city rentals. In other words, overspending on fields means we lack the resources to embark on creative new programming.

Long-Term Objectives:

In order to address these financial challenges, OCUA has three long-term financial objectives:

1. Grow our total revenues through adding new teams and through adding new revenue streams. With a more intensive use of existing and projected fields, the Association can add new teams within its programmed field stock, which in turn, would allow for our programming budget to grow at an accelerated pace. Increasing total revenues by 25% would allow us to devote sufficient spending on programs and staff to deliver on many of the objectives of this plan. Also, shift membership dues from team-based to a

combination of individual-based and team-based. Individual memberships would offer – in addition to the right to play in our leagues – certain benefits, such as discounts with partner businesses or the opportunity to attend a set number of clinics for free.

2. Protect against financial shocks by diversifying our revenue streams and increasing our retained earnings.
3. Rebalance our expenditures to spend a smaller share on fields and more on programs and people.

Call to Action:

To realize our finance objectives, we need to move forward in three key areas, as outlined below. If you are interested in getting involved in one or more of these initiatives – or if there is another initiative you would propose – please contact the team leader or email: plan@ocua.ca

FINANCE: Required Initiatives	Team Leader
Increasing Total Revenues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow our membership, and shift payment to both individual and team memberships (keeping price neutrality for players). • Develop a new funding stream from sponsorship. • Develop a new funding stream from merchandising. • Develop a new funding stream from government grants. • Evaluate the possibility of renting UPI fields to other sports. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
Protecting Against Financial Vulnerability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to increase our Contingency / Retained Earnings to 5% of total expenditures. • Adopt a policy of charging tournaments the full cost (including fixed costs and upkeep) of UPI field rentals. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
Rebalancing Our Expenditures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure relatively more public city fields, to bring down the share of total expenditures on fields to no more than 50%. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

ANNEX 1 – An Overview of *Ultimate 2.0*

Ultimate – as a sport that is almost 40 years old (or 20 years in the capital) – is coming of age. It is moving out of its awkward adolescent and is ready to be taken seriously as a mainstream sport.

Ultimate is ripe to move forward. It is ready to go into the mainstream, and attract membership numbers that only soccer can rival. It is ready to be recognized by national sporting authorities and played in the most demanding sporting competitions. Ultimate is ready for corporations to get behind and use its unique traits to help promote their products as part of a certain lifestyle.

Ultimate is ready to move forward in the national capital region and across Canada. But it is also ready to sweep the world. Because the equipment needs are so minimal, and because of the unique ethic associated with the game, ultimate is ready to go into countries where it has never gone before.

While ultimate is ready for its next stage of development, there is currently no driver of change. Our Association could be the driver that brings about the new ultimate. Our Association could mobilize other leagues and associations behind a project – *Ultimate 2.0* – that takes our sport to a new level and sees it spread around the world.

For Ottawa to play such a leadership role, we need to first walk the walk. We need to continue being the largest league in the world, and we also need to be among the fastest growing. We need to get our members re-engaged and willing to work towards a common goal. Specifically, *Ultimate 2.0* needs to focus on growing the sport in our home base, growing the sport internationally, and providing the premier web resource on ultimate.

Growing locally is primarily about embarking on a new relationship with schools and youth. Growing internationally requires that we, along with other ultimate associations, work with partners including *Right to Play* to get ultimate into such unlikely places as refugee camps in war-torn countries. We need to partner with people such as Joel Silver, the Hollywood producer who single-handedly dreamed up the sport, to take us to a whole new level of exposure.

To provide the premier web resource for ultimate, we need to create a new site that attracts the global ultimate playing community. We need to assemble, and create if it does not exist, the best possible information and resources – such as video highlight reels, training manuals and coaching programs. We could also provide a *LeagueRunner* service to others – hosting turnkey league operations for any ultimate association in the world; we could also host forums for these leagues, as well as general forums for players anywhere in the world.

Above are some examples of what *Ultimate 2.0* could be. It needs to be big in its ambitions, and bold enough to get our members to rally behind. No one else is showing the way forward; with some courage and determination, our Association can carve out a global leadership role in taking ultimate out of its adolescent and turning it into an established sport that achieves the respect and recognition it deserves.

ANNEX 2 – Indicative Growth Model for the Ottawa-Carleton Ultimate Association

ADULT MEMBERS

Indicative Growth Model 2005-2025

	TOTAL		SUMMER						FALL			WINTER								
			Regular Members			Associate Members			Regular Members			Associate Members			Regular Members			Associate Members		
			Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd
2005	4,500	116	4,500	116	2	0	950	25	0	0	700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
2006	4,616	119	4,616	119	1		975	25	0											
2007	4,736	123	4,735	123	1		1,000	25	1											
2008	4,858	126	4,858	126	1		1,025	25	0											
2009	4,984	129	4,984	129	1		1,050	25	0											
2010	5,113	132	5,113	132	2		1,075	25	0											
2011	5,245	136	5,245	136	1		1,100	25	1											
2012	5,381	139	5,381	139	1		1,125	25	0											
2013	5,520	143	5,520	143	2		1,150	25	0											
2014	5,663	147	5,663	147	1		1,175	25	0											
2015	5,809	150	5,810	150	1		1,200	25	1											
2016	6,114	154	6,114	154	2		1,225	25	0											
2017	6,272	158	6,272	158	1		1,250	25	0											
2018	6,434	162	6,434	162	2		1,275	25	0											
2019	6,601	166	6,434	162	2		1,300	25	1											
2020	6,772	171	6,600	166	1		1,325	25	0											
2021	6,947	175	6,771	171	2		1,350	25	0											
2022	7,127	180	6,946	175	2		1,375	25	0											
2023	7,311	184	7,126	180	2		1,400	25	1											
2024	7,500	189	7,310	184	2		1,425	25	0											
2025	7,500	189	7,499	189	2	0	1,450	25	0	0	700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Required Average Annual Net Growth

2.6%

2.6%

2.1%

0.0%

Assumptions

2025 target in adult summer leagues is consistent with projected total population growth for the city.

Each summer/fall field supports 100 members (currently 48 summer fields support 4,500 members).

YOUTH MEMBERS

Indicative Growth Model 2005-2025

	TOTAL Net Grwth		SUMMER						FALL			WINTER								
			Regular Members			Associate Members			Regular Members			Associate Members			Regular Members			Associate Members		
			Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd	Total	Net Grwth	New Fields Req'd
2005	1,600		175		0		0		1,500		50		0							
2006	1,850	250	207	32	1				1,750	250	0	54	4	0						
2007	2,100	250	245	38	0				2,000	250	0	59	5	0						
2008	2,350	250	289	45	0				2,250	250	0	64	5	0						
2009	2,600	250	342	53	1				2,500	250	0	69	5	0						
2010	2,850	250	405	62	0				2,750	250	0	75	6	0						
2011	3,350	500	478	74	1				3,250	500	0	81	6	0						
2012	3,850	500	566	87	1				3,750	500	0	88	7	0						
2013	4,350	500	669	103	1				4,250	500	0	95	7	0						
2014	4,850	500	791	122	1				4,750	500	0	103	8	0						
2015	5,350	500	935	144	1				5,250	500	0	112	9	0						
2016	6,150	800	1,106	171	2				6,050	800	0	121	9	0						
2017	6,950	800	1,308	202	2				6,850	800	0	131	10	0						
2018	7,750	800	1,547	239	2				7,650	800	0	142	11	0						
2019	8,550	800	1,829	282	3				8,450	800	0	154	12	1						
2020	9,350	800	2,163	334	4				9,250	800	0	167	13	0						
2021	10,450	1,100	2,557	395	4				10,350	1,100	0	181	14	0						
2022	11,550	1,100	3,024	467	5				11,450	1,100	0	196	15	0						
2023	12,650	1,100	3,576	552	5				12,550	1,100	0	213	16	0						
2024	13,750	1,100	4,228	653	7				13,650	1,100	0	231	18	0						
2025	15,000	1,250	5,000	772	7	0		0	15,000	1,350	0	250	19	1	0					

Required Average Annual Net Growth

11.8%

18.2%

12.2%

8.4%

Assumptions

2025 target for fall Youth Associate members is based on a projected 1 in 8 middle/high school students playing the sport in the schools of Ottawa and Gatineau.

Associate school leagues provide their own fields.

The number of 2005 Youth Associate members is based on estimates of ultimate played in local schools; these individuals are not registered in LeagueRunner.

Each summer/fall field supports 100 members (currently 48 summer fields support 4,500 members).