



National Association of Japanese Canadians

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS TEAM REPORT**

**By: Bev Ohashi and David Mitsui**

The Future Directions Team (FDT) was created in 2016 as an ad hoc committee to involve the National Council (NC) in long term planning for the NAJC to ensure that its priorities and planning reflect the national and local needs of the Japanese Canadian communities.

Its members were comprised of: Andre Boutin-Maloney (2016), Eiko Eby (2018), Angela Kruger (2016), Susan Matsumoto (2016), Art Miki (2016-2018), David Mitsui (2016-18), Carolyn Nakagawa (2016-18), Ken Noma (2016-17), Bev Ohashi (2016-18), Takashi Ohki (2016-18), Ken Teramura (2016-18).

At the Calgary AGM 2016 and results from the 2016 National Survey, the following priorities were identified by National Council:

<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Updates</b>
Community Development	
Education	
Human Rights	
New Immigrants	
Young Leaders	

At the Ottawa AGM 2017, opportunity was given for National Council to discuss the impact of NAJC if financial resources are diminished and to review effective practices. Discussion points were also compiled by FDT for member organizations to organize a focus group to discuss these issues further and the following responses is a summary as well as recommendations from FDT:

	<b>Summary of Responses</b>	<b>Recommendations from FDT</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>New Immigrants From Japan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 77% supported the focus on new immigrants; those who did not may have believed that this priority was to replace existing priorities of NAJC when it was not meant to change the primary focus of NAJC</li> <li>- 3 priorities were identified by the survey:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) bilingual (E/J) or Jpn. Language Conference sessions</li> <li>b) bilingual (E/J) or Jpn. Language Cmtes/Work Groups</li> <li>c) Japanese language newsletter</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- invite as supporting member or partnership with Toronto Social Services and Vancouver Tonari Gumi</li> <li>- offer bilingual/parallel sessions at National Conferences (separate but focusing on the same topics; at the end, discussions are shared)</li> <li>- bilingual website and articles posted in Nikkei Voice and The Bulletin</li> <li>- costs have to be considered before these initiatives can move forward</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Regional Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- response to the 3 regions is very close:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 53.3% - Eastern (Ontario), Central (Manitoba, Alberta, &amp; Saskatchewan), and Pacific (BC &amp; Yukon)</li> <li>b) 46.7% - Eastern (Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa), Central (Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Thunder Bay), and</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more discussion is needed from membership to understand if all the options are presented including the discussion about restructuring of the AGM/NC may clarify membership's preference</li> </ul>



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	<p>Pacific (BC and Yukon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thunder Bay supports B; therefore recommend Model B</li> <li>- National Council Meetings occur as needed</li> <li>- Regional Meetings are supported if there is no National Conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide some time at the AGM/NC in Winnipeg to have this discussion</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Restructuring of AGM/NC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supported 2/3 years for the National Conference</li> <li>- some organizations supported subsidy by their own organization to offset the costs of an AGM/National Conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- same as above re: regional meetings</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Restructuring of Membership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supported individual members as 3 categories: Young Leaders (35 and under), Adults (36-59), Seniors (60+)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information will be shared with the Membership Committee and adjusted for 2019-20</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Young Leaders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- funding and mentoring were identified as ways that member organizations support YL</li> <li>- in addition, YL participate at local events as hosts or ambassadors as well as getting involved in social events and use of social media</li> <li>- NAJC is a catalyst for local Young Leaders Groups to stay motivated by sending delegates to the AGM/NC</li> <li>- goal for local organizations is to support independence and decision-making for YL; focus on empowerment and not just engagement</li> <li>- acknowledged systemic barriers in terms of participation; not just for YL but other groups that are underrepresented in the NAJC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continue with further dialogue and conversations</li> <li>- organize individual young leaders sessions at the Winnipeg AGM/NC</li> <li>- keep YL funds managed by YL and for YL</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supported bi-monthly ZOOM meetings with NEB but contradicts the majority that supported NC meetings as needed</li> <li>- continue with regular postings on the NAJC website and social media as well as the Bulletin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support on-going updates on NAJC website, social media, and Bulletin</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Restructuring of NEB</b></p> <p><b>A) Reducing the size of NEB from 10 to 7 elected members</b></p> <p>Positive Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-cost savings</li> <li>-possibly greater efficiencies</li> <li>-potential ability of smaller board to discuss and respond more quickly to issues</li> </ul> <p>Negative Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-regional representation may be limited</li> <li>-increased individual member work-load and heavier portfolio responsibility</li> <li>-board member burn-out a real concern</li> <li>-some projects not addressed due to limited manpower</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reduce the number of NEB elected members from 10 to 9 positions (eliminate past-president).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B) Restructuring of Standing Committees</b></p> <p>Positive Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-fewer Standing committees provides the NEB to focus on board priorities and strategies</li> <li>-get more people involved on Standing Committees; increase outreach to volunteers and member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarify the difference between standing and ad hoc committees.</li> <li>- Explore possibilities of reducing the number of NEB Standing or other Committees. A list of Standing Committees to be listed in the AGM</li> </ul>



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	<p>organizations;          -make Standing Committees more accountable for results          -reduced cost; simpler structure          -increased focus on priority issues          Negative Impacts:          -committees may lose influence without an elected board member assigned to it          -need very clear communications          -reduced capacity of the NAJC and NEB          -more work for a reduced board compliment          -may be a challenge to complete long-term projects          -less focus on ACE and Youth if some portfolios reduced to Special Advisor role</p>	<p>booklet.</p>
	<p><b>C) Creation of Special Advisors on NAJC</b></p> <p>Positive Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-effective way to retain skilled and experienced individuals who have served their 4 years on a committee</li> <li>-reduces the cost (both financial and human) of having NEB members assigned to work on that issue</li> <li>-creates opportunity to recruit special expertise in an identified priority area</li> <li>-Terms of Reference, including milestones, to be shared with Member Organizations</li> </ul> <p>Negative Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-is it expected that Special Advisors will attend the AGM? If so, what is the cost?</li> <li>-if properly mobilized, there is no downside</li> <li>-possible negative repercussions if Special Advisor recommendations are not supported by the NEB</li> <li>-this role can create confusion if the Special Advisor does not follow the NEB's strategic plan or there is a question how the work benefits the NAJC</li> <li>-Special Advisors need to be open to and understand regional and community differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish Special Advisor positions with Specific Terms of Reference if required. Eg. Human Rights, Elders and Business Initiatives, and New Immigrants.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>D) Standing Presidents of NAJC member organizations should NOT be eligible for Executive Officer Positions on the NEB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-approximately 54% support for this statement</li> <li>-however, the others disagreed or cautioned that smaller member organizations may not have a choice of nominating candidates to NAJC Executive Officer positions due to the limited size of their membership/board</li> </ul> <p>FOR THE PROPOSAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-eliminates any doubt of conflict</li> <li>-potential conflict of interest may cause biased views</li> </ul> <p>AGAINST THE PROPOSAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-they can recuse themselves from discussion and voting on issues of conflict</li> <li>-there may be very qualified individuals not permitted to run for elected office</li> <li>-currently all NEB members must declare any and all conflicts of interests...the position of President is the only Executive position that should be ineligible for office of a sitting member organization president.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standing Presidents of NAJC member organizations are not eligible to hold the office of President of the NAJC.</li> </ul>



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