



# **BUILDING A GREATER OTTAWA**

**GENERAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF OTTAWA  
L'ASSOCIATION DES ENTREPRENEURS GÉNÉRAUX D'OTTAWA**

## **2020 – SEMI-ANNUAL UPDATE**

**September 15, 2020  
Ottawa, ON**

[www.gcaottawa.com](http://www.gcaottawa.com)





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# SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

General Contractors Association of Ottawa, Semi-Annual General Meeting  
& Golf Tournament  
Tuesday, September 15, 2020  
Kanata Golf & Country Club





## **2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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## **LIAISON CONTACTS**

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – by Shawn Berube**

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you for taking the time to Join us at our Annual Golf Tournament and SAGM. The structure of this year's event has been modified to be inline with best practices as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the circumstances, we feel fortunate to be able to host this event.

The following is a summary of topics and key items which have transpired over the past 6 months. I encourage you to take the time to read through these items. If you have any questions, comments, or ideas you would like to share with the Board, please reach out to me at [sberube@gcaottawa.com](mailto:sberube@gcaottawa.com) or 613.913.6339

### ***Board Member Departures – Call out for NEW Board Members / Executive Director***

Just as our industry is seeing some unpredictability in 2020, The GCAO Board has felt similar volatility recently. The Board has lost 2 key members. **Mr. John Herbert** has left the Board. John was recently brought on as Executive Director and played a key role in providing some separation for fellow Board members when communicating with clients. John provided great insight and perspective during conversations. His time with the Board was very valuable and we would like to thank him for his effort.

The Board has recently lost another Director. **Mr. Gaéтан Lacroix** has stepped down from his duties as Director/Secretary with the Board. Gaéтан has served on the Board since January 2019. We would like to thank him for all his work and contributions to the Associations initiatives.

**The GCAO needs individuals who are interested in joining the Board of Directors.** We continue to face new and similar challenges as General Contractors in Ottawa, and there is value in sticking together through those challenges. Please reach out to me at [sberube@gcaottawa.com](mailto:sberube@gcaottawa.com) if you or someone in your firm is looking to join the GCAO Board of Directors.

We are also looking to fill the vacancy of Executive Director. This role is a salaried position tailored for someone who is looking to advance the Association's goals. It is ideal for someone who may not be currently involved with clients/buyers through a member firm but have a good understanding of the industry. If you have any suggestions or recommendations for an individual, please send through their contact information.



### ***2020 AGM & Project Awards Program (CALL FOR ENTRIES)***

Although there is uncertainty with the possible second wave of COVID-19, the Board is planning the 2020 AGM to be held at the Brookstreet Hotel. Date is TBD. As part of this AGM, we have our Bi-Yearly Project Awards Program. This will be the 6<sup>th</sup> time for this program, and it consists of 4 individual awards. Three of which are related to excellence in specific project value, and a fourth award is the Don Chutter Meritorious Award. The awards will be presented at the AGM. For more information on how to enter, please see the forms and guidelines attached to the end of this document.

### ***NCHCA & GCAO***

The NCHCA has taken on the initiative to improve the recruitment and retention of workers in the construction industry. We recognize that the shortage of workers in our industry is expected to worsen as it is predicted that 1 in 5 workers will retire in the next 10 years. There is a great need to improve public perception of our industry and address barriers that impact on our ability to recruit and retain a sustainable workforce.

The NCHCA is undertaking a multi-year recruitment project and have received preliminary funding approval from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to address industry labour shortages in the Ottawa area. The project will focus on improving perception of the industry and developing practical solutions with input from our members and other construction associations. Although the outcome they hope to achieve is that the public perceives a career in the heavy construction industry to be an attractive and sustainable career choice, there is tremendous value for the GCAO Members.

The GCAO has provided our support to the NCHCA and will be in further discussion on how we can provide input and value to their initiative.

### ***GCAO 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***

2021 will be GCOA 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Board had started to develop a sub committee to organize an event which would mark this special milestone. This was an effort previously led by Mr. John Herbert. With his departure, the Board will reorganize and determine best steps moving forward to celebrate this milestone.



***Donald Ellwood, P. Eng***

Don passed away at the age of 80 years old on August 28, 2020. Beloved husband of Susan (nee Neal). Loving father of Michael (Heather) and Dianne (Oscar) Tolgyesi. Proud grandfather of Kevin (Riley), Thomas, Allison, and Mark. Predeceased by brother Robert.

Don was an active member of the Ottawa Construction Community and had a profound impact throughout his career. Don was truly devoted to the GCAO during his tenure and was the association's President during 1980 and 1981. In 2005, Don was rightfully given the honour of the first honorary life member of the GCAO.



## **TREASURERS' UPDATE**

The operations of the Association have fluctuated over the first half of the calendar year. Impacts to the associations social calendar and monthly board meetings have been felt by COVID-19, all of which have impacted the projections for the association.

Revenues have remained relatively consistent, but we have seen a decrease in expenses. We are expecting a larger surplus than previously projected (+/- \$15,000). This is due to Board meetings conducted by teleconference, the departure of John Herbert, and the cancellation of the cocktail party. We will hopefully use the opportunity to fund the Executive Director position going forward and possibly building the GCAO brand going into next year our 50<sup>th</sup> year.



## **TENDERING PRACTICES REPORT – by Alessandro Guarna**

### **1. Estonian Embassy Tender (RMA Architects)**

Back in February the Association was alerted to a tender administered by Robertson Martin Architects (RMA) regarding the 148 Daly Ave. (Estonian Embassy) project. Members noted that at time of tender an itemized cost breakdown was requested including up to 600 lines of cost breakdown. Additionally, the tender documents referred to a post tender negotiation between all bidders which appeared to be an attempt to negotiate price and schedule after a bid was submitted.

Unfortunately, the GCAO was unable to connect with the tendering authority before the tender closed and instead alerted members through a mass email regarding our concerns and indicated that other member firms were planning to qualify the bids to not complete the entire cost breakdown.

Post tender, we were told that there were three pre-qualified bidders and all of them did qualify their bids to not complete the entire itemized cost bid form. However, the bidders were separately invited to discuss their bids, the project, risk, timing and submit a “final bid” without knowing the tender results. According to the project owner this was standard procedure by Estonian Procurement law.

It was unclear which members attended the post-tender interview and obviously the GCAO was disappointed by this process as it is unfair to all bidders.

A letter was subsequently prepared to RMA to express our concerns, and we were happy to note that we received a prompt response indicating that this was not typical practice for the firm and in fact the firm’s approach with the owner was to follow the CCDC documents and process, however it was the owner that insisted on these aspects of their tender.

Members are reminded that when tendering projects for foreign governments, the diversity in cultures and their unique approach to procurement processes can lead to increased challenges but also increased risks of conflict and fewer avenues of resolution. With an embassy you are dealing with foreign land where Canadian laws may not apply (no lien rights, fewer rights in general). In our experience, foreign governments tend to “play by their own rules” and so members are cautioned when bidding these projects in general.



## 2. County of Renfrew Admin Bldg. Reno (+VG Architects)

In mid-May, the GCAO was referred to the above-named tender which included a needlessly complex bid form but also included reference to some unfair SGCs which were newly added from this procurement authority.

In addition to 3 base bids (45, 60 and 90 day award bid values), a complete list of subcontractors (15 divisions) was required at time of tender, and one hour after closing there was a laundry list of separate prices, unit prices, hourly rates as well as the complete itemized price breakdown.

With respect to SGCs, there was an additional 1% holdback for 2 years for warranty and deficiency items and a project closeout holdback of \$30,000.

The GCAO immediately connected with the procurement authority and held several phone discussions to review these items.

While the GCAO was successful in reducing the 3 base bids to just the 1, and extending the closing deadline for an additional 3 hours to allow the GC time to complete the post tender breakdowns, we were disappointed that the project owner and architect were unmoving on simplifying the bid form and the 1% holdback.

During our discussions with the architect it was determined that the 1% holdback is a common SGC for this consultant, and so the GCAO has requested a follow-up meeting with the partners of the firm to discuss this provision as unfair and punitive to GCs and suggest more appropriate alternatives.

## 3. Carleton University Procurement Update

On June 22, the GCAO along with the OCA met virtually with those in charge of procurement at Carleton University as a follow up to the previous meetings to reflect on the changes in their tendering practices that were being undertaken as a result of our discussions.

We are extremely happy to inform our members that because of our discussions, Carleton are planning to have the **2% warranty and deficiency holdback provisions removed from their tenders**. This represents a huge win for our members and their suppliers/subtrades who would previously have to wait up to a year to receive this payment on completed projects.

Additionally, in response to the lack of transparency for who would get invited to bid on their upcoming tenders, Carleton has committed to refining their Pre-qualified Vendor lists to be as fair and inclusive as possible to all GCs while maintaining their standards. All GCs will have an opportunity to pre-qualify. To this end the OCA / GCAO is developing a task force to help guide the pre-qual process to ensure it reflects industry best practices.



Finally, Carleton are no longer going to require the use of prequalified trades, but rather let the GC decide if the trades are capable enough to complete the work and hold the GC to a higher standard. They are looking into implementing a Vendor Performance Evaluation system to accomplish this.

When asked about publishing their unofficial tender results, this was one issue that the owner would not compromise on despite our best efforts to explain why this is a benefit to them and how most public body contracting authorities in Ottawa conform to this. This will be something that we will have to agree to disagree on and will continue to lobby for at future meetings.

#### **4. Nepean Sportsplex Washroom Renovation (City of Ottawa / GRC Architects)**

The most recent tendering issues noted were with the City's washroom renovation project. We were surprised to see such aggressive liquidated damages and penalties on such a tight schedule (60 days). Worse, they included new SGC provisions which allowed the Consultant to charge the GC for "frivolous RFIs" and "rejected shop drawings". During the question period several member firms asked the city if they would be enforcing the liquidated damages and other above noted provisions. The city indicated that they would be.

Shortly thereafter the GCAO was notified and several exchanges took place as well as a lengthy phone discussion. The City was surprised that none of the bidders had discussed extending the schedule during the question period and so took no action related to this – however after our discussion an addendum was issued further increasing the schedule.

Regarding the other SGCs, in the GCAO's opinion, on principal alone instituting a cost to the successful GC for asking "too many questions" or having "rejected shop drawings" is unfair, inappropriate and potentially a litigious issue (what constitutes "frivolous"). More unusual is that City already has a Vendor Performance Management (VPM) system in place to recognize good vs poor performing General Contractors.

As this was beyond the Project Manager's ability to control in a short timeframe, we look forward to having a productive discussion on this at the next City of Ottawa / OCA meeting in September 2020.



## **OTTAWA CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION (OCA) TENDERING PRACTICES COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORT**

Over the past few months our association has continued to work very closely with the Ottawa Construction Association on numerous files. Our two associations have had some success working together to tackle major items and the relation is very positive for both parties. Our tendering practices board members have worked with the OCA on the following files throughout the pandemic. The OCA continues to support our association by providing free meeting space for our monthly board meetings. We greatly appreciate the assistance the OCA provides to our association and thank them for their support.

### **Carleton University**

June 2020, we sat down with Carleton University to continue conversations from our previous meetings. This turned into a productive meeting and resulted in some movement and clarity from Carleton University Procurement. Key points from this meeting were:

- Carleton University is eliminating the additional 2% holdbacks (1% deficiency, 1% warranty)
- Relationship with Colliers for project management services is being phased out by end of August 2020
- The Ernst & Young 3<sup>rd</sup> party review of procurement in late 2019 is leading to several procurement changes in support of greater transparency.
- Number of prequalified firms to drop from current list of up to 23 to 7-8 so that no rotation is required. All will have equal opportunity for projects.
- Prequalification for a new VENDOR OF RECORD List of contractors is being prepared now for release soon. OCA and GCAO offered assistance in reviewing the prequalification criteria and scoring.
- CU will no longer insert a list of prequalified subcontractors into general construction project requirements.
- The New VOR will focus on specialized areas i.e. Building Envelope/Restoration work, Fit-up work, Upgrade projects as opposed to one generic general contractor list.
- Contractor performance evaluation system is being planned.





- Contractors will be revised of their bid ranking. Full bid results will not be divulged due to nature of several CU qualifying contract criteria.
- CU is introducing new delivery methods and presently has two Construction Management contracts with ED and M. Sullivan & Son. The University is looking at trying an Integrated Project Delivery project on a more complicated project in the near future.
- Prompt payment – CU has rolled out an electronic invoice approval system to ensure that payment is made within 28 days.
- CU has submitted for Federal/Provincial 50% funding for a \$100 million University Centre and Wellness Hub
- In the market for a new ENGINEERING building of 150,000 to 200,000 sf
- Developing an Energy Master plan

### **University of Ottawa**

The OCA and GCAO have recently reached out to UofO to discuss the introduction of ISNetWorld. They have signed a three-year agreement with ISN which will require any General contractor to pay a substantial annual fee to ISN. The OCA put a meeting request to UofO. At the moment, they have not provided a reply or willingness to meet. We will continue to follow up with this item.



## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

We have lost four members since the start of the calendar year, Terrix Construction Corp, , Pranger-Debruyne Construction Ltd., Ruiters Construction Ltd., and Tandem Networks Inc. all decided not to renew their membership. With the diligent work by Yves Beaudoin, we have recently received applications for three new members. The Board will be reviewing their applications and Yves continues to reach out to firms about joining the association.

As member firms, we ask that you continue to be diligent in contacting the association when new general contractors associated with the ICI sector are seen working in our local area or are bidding on local works. On requests put forth by the Association members, the board will approach the general contracting companies that are active in the Ottawa and surrounding areas on the benefits that accompany membership to the GCAO.

With 52 members representing all general contractors in the Ottawa area, both large and small, the GCAO can speak with authority when addressing tendering practices, and when voicing our concerns with, design consultants, project management firms, other associations and most importantly, tendering authorities.



**2020 AWARDS PROGRAM - INTENT TO SUBMIT FORM**

**6th - General Contractors Association of Ottawa Awards**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Ph. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Submitter(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Category (please check the appropriate categories)

**Category A - Buildings- Architectural/Commercial/Institutional**

- Up to \$5 Million in value
- From \$5 Million to \$15 in value
- \$15 Million in value and over

Description (50 words or less): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NB: This description will be used for the printed awards program.**

**Please return only this form to GCAO: Yves Beaudoin [ybeaudoin@gcaottawa.com](mailto:ybeaudoin@gcaottawa.com)**

**by Nov 27<sup>th</sup> 2020.**



## AWARDS PROGRAM - CALL FOR ENTRIES

### 6th - General Contractors Association of Ottawa Awards

Entries are now invited to the 2020 General Contractors Association of Ottawa Awards featuring the *Don Chutter Meritorious Achievement Award*. Three Awards of Excellence and one Award of Merit will be given.

Winners will be honoured at the GCAO Annual General Meeting with a Presentation Ceremony held in January of 2021 (TBD due to social gathering restrictions). Projects are judged by a panel of eminent professional engineers, architects, and owners representing client groups, professional associations and academia who are not currently engaged in General Contracting. Entries must be made directly to GCAO.

#### Don Chutter Meritorious Achievement Award

The *Don Chutter Meritorious Achievement Award* will be presented to the submission that best demonstrates the contribution of General Contracting to our quality of life in Ottawa. The judging panel will consider that project which excels in all areas of the rated criteria and is also an Ottawa and Surrounding Region Project. The criteria will consider four different but related aspects of the submitting firm's role in the project:

- ✚ Project objectives, solutions and achievements;
- ✚ Technical excellence and innovation;
- ✚ Level of difficulty; and
- ✚ Contribution to economic, social or environmental quality of life

Ottawa-based projects in all categories are eligible for this award.

#### Awards of Excellence

Up to a total of Three *Awards of Excellence* will be presented based on project size.

- ✚ Category A - Buildings- Architectural/Commercial Institutional

Up to a total of Three Awards of Excellence will be presented based on the following project value subcategories:

- ✚ up to \$5 Million in value
- ✚ from \$5 Million to \$15 in value
- ✚ \$15 Million in value and over



## Eligibility

- ✚ Submissions shall be by an owner or employee of a firm that is a member in good standing with GCAO during the year of submission.
- ✚ Joint submissions involving non-GCAO members are acceptable if a GCAO member(s) did more than 50% of the work and submit in their name. All non-members must be recognized (including other General Contractors) and their contribution explained.
- ✚ A member may submit a maximum of two entries, including joint submissions.
- ✚ Projects entered must have been completed to the Client's satisfaction no earlier than two years prior to the call for submissions. Client confirmation of completion and approval to submit must accompany the submission.
- ✚ Projects must be managed out of an office in Ottawa and Surrounding Region.
- ✚ Entries will conform to the Exhibit Panel and Project Binder Specifications (attached).
- ✚ No additions or modifications to the entry are allowed after delivery to GCAO. Judges may however seek clarification from the entrant.
- ✚ Judging results and their publicity are confidential until the awards presentation.

## Publicity

It is intended that entries receiving awards will be showcased in *Ottawa Construction News*, *Construction Comment*, *Ottawa Business Journal* and distributed across the local industry and to clients, architects, engineers, regulators, industry associations, and policy makers.

GCAO may retain all submissions until the next program for public relations purposes. GCAO may also prepare an audio-visual promotional presentation around the award winners.

## Deadlines

- ✚ **November 27, 2020** *Intent to Submit* form due
- ✚ **January 08, 2021** *Exhibit Panel and Project Binder* due
- ✚ *Awards Presentation at GCAO Annual General Meeting - January 2021 date TBD*

The Call for Entries is intended to describe the program and the Award Submission - Exhibit Panel and Project Binders specifications (page 4 & 5 of 5) are intended to convey the expected submission requirements.

**Note: Only the *Intent to Submit* form (the first page of the awards program package) must be returned at this time.**



## **AWARD SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS - EXHIBIT PANEL AND PROJECT BINDER SPECIFICATIONS**

Each submission shall consist of TWO separate items: A. **Exhibit panel**; and B. **Project binder**.

### **A. Exhibit Panel (Award winners will be displayed at AGM)**

The construction component of the project submitted must be clearly identified. Someone not familiar with the project should be able to quickly interrelate the text, graphic and photographic information provided and grasp the essential nature of the project. The titles of projects should be understandable.

#### *Exhibit Panel Dimensions*

- 750 mm x 1000 mm (29.5" x 39.4"); and
- Single thickness of 5 mm foam core; not framed by wood or metal beading etc.

#### *Text & Labels*

- Print size of text and labels: no less than 5 mm vertically (24 point size); and
- The names of the client and non-members involved in the design process: at least 5 mm vertically.

#### *Graphics*

- Graphic and photographic information is strongly encouraged; and
- GCAO logo: 62 mm vertically (electronic version available from the GCAO on request).

### **B. Project Binder Specifications**

The project binder is a key component of the project submission and is important in establishing the eligibility of the project for an award. The binder must be a standard three-ring loose leaf type, 8.5" x 11" in size and no more than one inch thick. The submitting member firms and project name clearly identified on the outside front cover and spine. The binder must contain no more than **13 single-sided, 8.5" x 11"** pages described as follows:

- 1 page** Title/data page using the **Intent to Submit form**. Additional pages are permitted only for purposes of identifying other project participants that are not part of the submissions (e.g. other general contractors, subcontractors, consultants) and their respective roles in the project.
- 1 page** Letter of acknowledgement and consent signed by an authorized person or persons on behalf of the submitting firm or firms clarifying and confirming that:
- The submission accurately reflects the role of the submitter(s) in the project;
  - Other subcontractors and consultants and their respective roles are indicated in the project data sheet and are aware of the submission (no consent is required);
  - GCAO may utilize any and all submitted materials for the purposes of promoting the awards program; publicizing winning entries and other participants; promoting and enhancing the image and prestige of GCAO members and the General Contracting sector as a whole; and otherwise advocating on behalf of GCAO and its members.
- 1 page** Owner's letter providing:
- Permission to enter the project into the competition;
  - Confirmation that the services were provided and sufficiently completed to the client's satisfaction;
  - Confirmation that the overall objectives of the project were met within the approved timeframe and budget;
  - Verification of the current status of the project (i.e. whether a facility is operational or date expected to be operational, or whether a report has been implemented).
- 1 page** Executive summary of the project in no more than 250 words that succinctly describes (for a non-technical audience) why the project should be recognized by clearly identifying:
- The role of the submitter(s) in the overall project;
  - What was expected; What was done, and What was achieved.
- The executive summary should be written in the third party and in a style suitable for publicizing the project and the awards program.
- 4 pages** Explanation of how the project fulfills the judging criteria in each of the following categories: (Note that in these pages, clear and concise writing are considered very important. The role of the submitter(s) in the overall project must be made clearly evident.)
- Project objectives, solutions and achievements;**
- Safety - confirm # of LTIs on project (subcontractors and own forces and any fatalities)
  - Project Management and Schedule
- Technical excellence and innovation;**
- Innovations and Environmental Highlights
  - Design-Build Achievement (if applicable)
- Level of complexity; and**
- Uniqueness and Complexity
  - Teamwork
- Contribution**
- Customer satisfaction - reference letter
  - Contribution to Ottawa area economic, social or environmental quality of life (as applicable)



- 1 page** Sketches/drawings - this page may be either 11" x 17" or 8.5" x 11" in size folded.
- 3 pages** Up to eight 4" x 6" prints or other graphic representations showing key aspects of the submission, one should be an overview suitable for publicity purposes.
- 1 pouch** No more than eight matching 35 mm colour transparencies or eight PowerPoint slides or eight images on CD. Where possible, at least one image should capture the essence of the project and convey to a non-technical audience the contribution of the project to social, economic or environmental quality of life.

Please note that in the interests of the judges' time, materials such as frontispieces, contents sheets, blank sheets, dividers, additional photographs and plans are not required.

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