

Frederick County Association of REALTORS®

Strategic Plan

2017 - 2020

MISSION

The mission of the Frederick County Association of REALTORS® (FCAR) is to enhance its members' professionalism and adherence to the Code of Ethics, and to raise the awareness of the value of REALTORS® through community and political involvement in protecting real property rights. FCAR achieves its mission through collaboration with the Maryland Association of REALTORS®, the National Association of REALTORS® and other like-minded organizations.

GOALS

1. EDUCATION - FCAR is recognized for providing superior membership value, based upon its high quality education.
2. COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY - FCAR will be recognized for providing superior membership and community value, based upon its high quality customer service and communications through its innovative utilization of technology to benefit its members.
3. CONSUMER OUTREACH & MEMBER ADVOCACY - FCAR will be recognized as a leader in consumer outreach and member advocacy.
4. ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY - FCAR shall account for membership monies in a fiscally responsible manner by creating an environment of budgetary oversight, cost savings, promoting shared services and avoiding duplication of services.
5. PROFESSIONALISM & VOLUNTEERISM - FCAR will be known for its dedication to increasing the professionalism and volunteerism of its members.

EDUCATION

1. GOAL: FCAR is recognized for providing superior membership value, based upon its high quality education.

A. Strategy: Implement plan to provide continuing education at no additional cost to members within the existing dues structure.

1. Tactic: Determine which continuing education courses will be offered at no extra charge to members and will develop a yearly calendar of courses in advance, within the annual budget of FCAR. *Education Committee*
2. Tactic: FCAR to adopt a “no-show / late cancellation” policy that will assess a \$25 charge to registrants who do not show up or call to cancel 1 day prior to the scheduled CE class. *Education Committee*

B. Strategy: Consistently poll members through surveys, focus groups, and personal conversations to determine their desire for specific class topics, and the current trends and business challenges which could be addressed through the development of timely education classes.

1. Tactic: Develop and implement a model survey to be used at each educational offering to capture necessary member feedback. *Education Committee*
2. Tactic: Create a plan and calendar of relevant and pragmatic educational offerings, through traditional and alternative delivery systems, to reach the members in a systematic and comprehensive manner. *Education Committee*
3. Tactic: Communicate with and find partnership opportunities with FCAR brokerages to develop and/or provide needed education that might otherwise be out of the reach of either FCAR or the brokerages. *FCAR Leadership & Education Committee*

C. Strategy: Develop or sponsor classes for various practice specialties (e.g., residential brokers, owner/managers, property managers, commercial brokers, appraisers, resort and second home specialists etc.) based on member wants and needs.

1. Tactic: Offer Certification and/or Designation classes based on member input at least twice per year. Use proceeds from class registrations to pay for Rebac license, instructors fees, etc. and use surplus funds to help offset costs associated with offering free CE to members. *Education Committee*

2. Tactic: Track members who are not attending classes, survey them about what educational offerings they would attend, if any, and then target marketing efforts to the same group of members the classes which are offered as a result of their input. *Education Committee*
- D. Strategy: Based upon the needs and desires of the members or in response to “hot topics” in the market place, create a series of (up to one hour) web-based classes and post the classes online for those who cannot participate in the original webinar presentation.
1. Tactic: Create and research potential for selling the web-based classes to, or sharing with, other REALTOR® organizations. *Education Committee/Informed Professionals Committee*
- E. Strategy: Investigate opportunities to access My REALTOR® Party funds to sponsor topic appropriate (e.g., smart growth, affordable housing and diversity training) educational or training opportunities. *Affordable Housing, Equal Opportunity & Education Committees*
- F. Strategy: Incorporate NAR’s model “New Member Orientation Program” into FCAR’s orientation program and conduct periodic sessions at FCAR for all new members. Use new member orientation program to encourage new members to get involved in FCAR activities. *Education & Membership Committees*
- G. Strategy: Seek opportunities to offer night & weekend mandatory CE classes each quarter. Find instructors & monitors to fulfill commitments as needed.
1. Tactic: Ensure that classes are offered in a variety of educational formats (e.g., live instruction, online, webinars) and at a variety of times (e.g., early morning, evenings or after normal working hours for those members who are working 2nd “traditional” jobs). *Education Committee*

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

2. GOAL: FCAR is recognized for providing superior membership and community value, based upon its high quality customer service and communications through its innovative use of technology to benefit its members.

A. Strategy: Focus the communications from FCAR to better reach the membership and to create a trust relationship between FCAR and all its members (e.g., residential brokers, commercial brokers, property managers, appraisers, etc.).

1. Tactic: Investigate Robo-calling/texting (Focus delivery of important information). *Communications Committee*
2. Tactic: Segment newsletter – survey form. Also segment member listings. More information to members from Board (Board meetings are open / include announcement & agenda). *Communications Committee*
3. Tactic: Create monthly talking points for distribution to the Board of Directors in an effort to create transparent and consistent messaging about FCAR, its services and programs. Members of the Board of Directors will utilize the talking points when speaking with brokers and other members, during office visits. etc. *Communications Committee*
4. Tactic: Utilize the FCAR YouTube channel creating content (e.g., videos of programs, monthly President’s message) and utilize YouTube programming from other sources of value to FCAR members. *Communications , Informed Professionals & Education Committee*
5. Tactic: Create a communications campaign for social media for the purpose of communicating important information in the places where the members are already congregating. *Communications Committee*
6. Tactic: Continue member groups on social media for distribution of more confidential or “in the know” communications. Use these private groups to drive volunteerism. *Communications & YPN Committees*
7. Tactic: Continue to measure success of communications through improvement of click rates in email communications, increasing both member access as well as time spent on the FCAR website. *Communications Committee*

B. Strategy: To better communicate the value of membership to the members, create a membership brochure for distribution with dues billings that monetizes the value to the member of the services provided by FCAR.

1. Tactic: Create online brochure containing “value propositions” that stress the value of membership. *Membership & Communications Committee*
2. Tactic: Create bullet points to be printed and shared in brochure. *Membership & Communications Committee*
3. Tactic: Interpret and communicate the services and programs offered by NAR and MAR to enhance the members’ perceived and actual value of their entire REALTOR® membership. *Membership & Communications Committee*
4. Tactic: Encourage member participation in the MAR Legal Hotline. With permission from MAR, republish any available legal hotline articles online and through FCAR’s various social media outlets. *Communications Committee*

C. Strategy: Develop and implement a public relations campaign to better reach the community at large with a positive message regarding FCAR, its members and current market conditions. Use the public relations campaign to ensure that buyers and sellers utilize the services of FCAR’s members when buying, selling or leasing real property in Frederick and the surrounding market area.

1. Tactic: Create a consumer/public dialogue through social media, attendance at consumer events regarding the real estate market, and community service related activities. At each of these events, designated FCAR members will take the opportunity to communicate the importance of, and the process for, investing in and selling real property, legislative and local government issues and Tactics that impact real property ownership rights, and other timely topics that will enhance the reputation of FCAR and its members to consumers. *ALL Committees including Communications*
2. Tactic: Identify organizations/community groups where we can provide value.
3. Tactic: Promote positivity in the real estate industry and marketplace through timely dissemination of positive news related to the efforts of FCAR and its members. *Communications Committee*

- D. Strategy: Seek out opportunities for earned media. Actively pursue opportunities to attract media exposure for good works FCAR members perform within the community (e.g., Soup Kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, Charity Auction, American Home Month, Fair Housing Conference, New Teacher Luncheon) and through development of strategic alliances with housing advocacy groups. *Communications Committee with help from Affordable Housing, American Home Month & Community Service Committees*
- E. Strategy: Capture and link FCAR's website to existing real estate programming that is public focused and which will change the perception of the market and emphasize the value of real property ownership. Develop a public facing portion of the website explaining "Why Use A REALTOR®?" with links to useful websites for consumers.
1. Tactic: Utilize data obtained through MRIS, RPR, Centralized Showing and Sentrilock to communicate accurate, timely and appropriate market information and to counteract inaccurate perceptions of the local market. *Communications Committee*
- F. Strategy: Create an awards/recognition program that recognizes members throughout the year and celebrate their contributions publicly.
1. Tactic: Bring member good deeds to website, newsletter & Facebook. *Communications Committee*
 2. Tactic: conduct awards program that encourages nominations into all awards offered by MAR; others as desired at local level. *Membership Committee and Board of Directors*
- G. Strategy: Continue to implement contemporary communication tools which will maximize the mobile revolution and engage FCAR's members through their mobile devices. *Communications Committee*
1. Tactic: Develop and implement method to solicit communication preferences of members for urgent messages.
 2. Tactic: Investigate video messaging, i.e., Bomb Bomb, embedded YouTube videos and Facebook Live for urgent and important messages.
- H. Strategy: Create page of links to technology tools from NAR, MAR, ZipForms, RPR & MRIS. *Technology & Communications Committees*
1. Tactic: Segregate newsletter to various groups and implement videos accordingly.
 2. Tactic: Email Brokers periodically.

CONSUMER OUTREACH & MEMBER ADVOCACY

3. GOAL: FCAR will be recognized as a leader in consumer outreach and member advocacy.

A. Strategy: Raise 100% of RPAC fundraising goal.

1. Tactic: Include in our dues billing a voluntary “above the line” recommended contribution to RPAC in an amount adequate to meet NAR RPAC fundraising goal, and include language to encourage that contribution. *Admin/Staff*
2. Tactic: Encourage 100% RPAC investment by all Board of Directors members, committee chairs and co-chairs, and brokers. *RPAC Committee, BOD, Committee Chairs*
3. Tactic: Develop an annual RPAC fundraising plan with multiple events. *RPAC Committee*
4. Tactic: Appoint RPAC liaisons for each brokerage office. *RPAC Committee*

B. Strategy: Provide or distribute information regarding the value of investing in and the value received from participation in RPAC.

1. Tactic: Disseminate information provided by local, state, and national Realtor organizations regarding the benefits of RPAC. *RPAC Committee*
2. Tactic: Provide recent local, state, and national examples of the benefits of RPAC investment. *RPAC Committee*
3. Tactic: Mention/promote RPAC investment at every membership meeting and educational event. *RPAC Committee*
4. Tactic: Create and promote RPAC-specific page on FCAR website. *RPAC Committee, Communications Committee*

C. Strategy: Achieve above-average participation rates on local, state, and NAR Calls for Action.

1. Tactic: Encourage members to download/use the Realtor Action Center app. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
2. Tactic: Use FCAR communication vehicles to encourage agents to respond to Calls for Action. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
3. Tactic: Encourage all board members, committee chairs, and other influential members to promote Calls for Action among their peers and on their social media sites. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*

4. Tactic: Encourage brokers to sign up for the Broker Involvement Program so agents will receive Calls for Action directly from their brokers. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*

D. Strategy: Be the “Voice for Real Estate” for the industry with elected & appointed officials, allied organizations and general public. *Legislative Committee*

1. Tactic: Promote market statistics and trends to members and consumers. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
2. Tactic: Encourage members to further distribute and promote market statistics and trends to consumers. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
3. Tactic: Disseminate information to members and consumers regarding issues that may impact home ownership and property rights, through media social media outlets, and email videos. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
4. Tactic: Promote FCAR website to members and consumers through social media and other means. *Communications Committee*
5. Tactic: Arrange interviews through local media outlets with FCAR leadership to provide context to federal, state, and local real estate data. *Legislative Committee & Communications Committee*
6. Tactic: Embed the free Real Estate Today radio audio player to FCAR website so agents and consumers can hear the show digitally each week. *Communications Committee*
7. Tactic: Add the free Realtor® Content Resource widget to FCAR website to stream original homeownership content from HouseLogic.com. *Communications Committee*

E. Strategy: Participate in the community to enhance the image of Realtors and to promote the value proposition of using a Realtor.

1. Tactic: Create a value proposition statement for FCAR to be placed on promotional materials, website, social media, etc. *Communications Committee & Informed Professionals?*
2. Tactic: Sponsor and/or participate in job fairs, small business fairs, college career fairs, and homeownership fairs. *Informed Professionals?*
3. Tactic: Sponsor a tour of vacant commercial properties. *Commercial Committee & Informed Professionals?*

F. Strategy: Engage in local politics to promote pro-Realtor® issues.

1. Tactic: Identify and support pro-Realtor® candidates using RPAC funds and/or applying for additional funds from NAR and/or MAR. *Legislative Committee & RPAC Committee*

2. Tactic: Foster relationships with local government officials and utilize the shared Government Affairs Director (GAD) to inform them on pro-Realtor® issues. *Legislative Committee & RPAC Committee*

G. Strategy: Boost consumer advocacy efforts and engage the public in legislative/political issues that impact homeownership, real estate investment, and related issues.

1. Tactic: Foster relationships with local government officials and utilize the shared Government Affairs Director (GAD) to inform them on issues affecting home ownership and property rights. *Legislative Committee*
2. Tactic: Apply for NAR Issues Mobilization grant. *Legislative Committee*
3. Tactic: Submit an op-ed or letter to the editor of the local newspaper addressing specific issues. *Legislative Committee*
4. Tactic: Conduct town hall meetings to address relevant local issues. *Legislative Committee*
5. Tactic: Mobilize members to ask their clients and customers to contact local representatives about issues. *Legislative Committee*

H. Strategy: Heighten community investment through organizing human resources (i.e. assisting in a Habitat for Humanity build, etc.) or fundraising for the benefit of local charitable/community organizations.

1. Tactic: Apply for NAR Housing Opportunity grants. *Community Service Committee?*
2. Tactic: Apply for Realtor® Party Community Outreach grants for Better Block or Placemaking projects. *Community Service Committee?*
3. Tactic: Organize Realtor® participation in community fundraising drives or events, such as local walkathons, donation drives, or volunteering at homeless shelters. *Community Service Committee?*

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

4. GOAL: FCAR shall account for membership monies in a fiscally responsible manner by creating an environment of budgetary oversight, cost savings, promoting shared services and avoiding duplication of services.

A. Strategy: FCAR shall operate with a balanced budget (independent of investment gains, dividend income &/or non-operational income).

Budget & Finance Committee

B. Strategy: Create a sub-committee to explore a future strategic real estate purchase & develop funding strategies to enable this objective.

C. Strategy: Continue shared service program with surrounding local associations or allied organizations. Utilize the shared service program to strengthen relationships between the neighboring REALTOR® associations.

1. Tactic: Utilize services of part-time Government Affairs Director (GAD) made possible due to partnership with two local associations and state association. *Legislative & RPAC Committees*

D. Strategy: Appoint a task force to explore other possible shared service opportunities to include education, event planning, etc.

1. Tactic: Investigate the viability of creating a regional association of REALTORS® with smaller surrounding local associations joining as councils that allow each council to continue traditions important to their members, but maximizing the resources of the members through offering non-duplicative services. *FCAR Leadership*

E. Strategy: To ensure FCAR's long term viability and financial stability, analyze FCAR's assets, particularly those funds currently deposited in savings accounts and investment portfolios, to determine if the assets are being put to their highest and best use. *Budget & Finance Committee*

PROFESSIONALISM & VOLUNTEERISM

5. GOAL: FCAR will be known for its dedication to increasing the professionalism and volunteerism of its members.

- A. Strategy: Stock up and pass out MAR's "Raising the Bar for REALTOR® Professionalism" common sense practices for respecting the public, property and peers. Give to new students/members at orientation.
FCAR Leadership
- B. Strategy: Utilize Ombudsman to help resolve differences between Agents/Brokers before they go to formal arbitration. *FCAR Leadership & Professional Standards/Grievance Committees*
- C. Strategy: Encourage, educate & communicate with FCAR Committees to work in unison towards the common goals and for the good of FCAR. *FCAR Leadership & All Committees*
- D. Strategy: Maximize the effectiveness of the volunteer members' time commitment. *CEO & FCAR Leadership*
 - 1. Tactic: Annual training provided to Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, BOD and Staff Liaisons to learn how to draft agendas, run meetings, recruit committee members and make work assignments.
- E. Strategy: Develop a robust leadership development committee to identify future leaders and encourage their involvement in FCAR activities.
 - 1. Tactic: Recommend future leaders for MAR's Leadership Academy each year and provide up to two (2) with tuition assistance.
 - 2. Tactic: Create a welcoming environment for new members to volunteer. Invite new members to social events and encourage current and past leadership to engage them in discussions regarding the business value of involvement (e.g., greater knowledge, ability to receive referrals, travel to meetings outside the market area, etc.)
 - i. Begin quarterly breakfast meetings with new members to meet Board members and Committee chairs.