



# Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

## Regional Watershed Alliance Agenda

3/18

November 14, 2018

6:00 P.M.

HEAD OFFICE, 101 EXCHANGE AVENUE, VAUGHAN

### Members

Chair: Jack Heath

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING #2/18, HELD ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2018.  
Minutes [Link](#)
4. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
5. PRESENTATIONS
  - 5.1 Presentation by Laurie Nelson, Associate Director, Planning And Development, TRCA's Roles and Responsibilities in Planning and Development
  - 5.2 Presentation by Noah Gaetz, Senior Manager, Research and Knowledge Management, in regards to item 7.1 TRCA's Evolving Approach to Natural Heritage Planning
6. CORRESPONDENCE
7. ITEMS FOR ALLIANCE ACTION
  - 7.1 TRCA's Evolving Approach to Natural Heritage Planning and Natural System Update

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| 7.2  | Board of Directors Administrative By-laws            | 7  |
| 7.3  | Youth Council Membership                             | 9  |
| 7.4  | 2019 Regional Watershed Alliance Meeting Dates       | 13 |
| 8.   | <b>PROJECT TEAMS AND SUBCOMMITTEE VERBAL UPDATES</b> |    |
| 8.1  | Greenspace and Ecosystem Services Working Group      |    |
| 8.2  | Youth Council  |    |
| 9.   | <b>ITEMS FOR ALLIANCE INFORMATION</b>                |    |
| 10.  | <b>NEW BUSINESS AND GOOD NEWS STORIES</b>            |    |
| 11.  | <b>ELECTION OF OFFICERS</b>                          |    |
| 11.1 | Chair of the Regional Watershed Alliance             |    |
| 11.2 | Vice-Chair of the Regional Watershed Alliance        |    |
| 12.  | <b>ADJOURNMENT</b>                                   |    |

NEXT MEETING OF THE REGIONAL WATERSHED ALLIANCE #1/19, TO BE HELD  
ON FEBRUARY 13, 2019 AT 6:30 P.M. AT HEAD OFFICE, 101 EXCHANGE  
AVENUE, VAUGHAN

Chandra Sharma, Director, Watershed Strategies

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## Section I – Items for Regional Watershed Alliance Action

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance  
Meeting #3/18, Wednesday, November 14, 2018

**FROM:** Noah Gaetz, Senior Manager, Research and Knowledge Management

**RE: TRCA'S EVOLVING APPROACH TO NATURAL HERITAGE PLANNING AND  
NATURAL SYSTEM UPDATE**

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### KEY ISSUE

TRCA is updating its Terrestrial Natural Heritage System (2007) to incorporate new and updated data and recent advances in ecosystem science. This update will ensure TRCA continues to support its municipal partners with the most up to date, science based information and tools.

### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS TRCA uses natural heritage science to inform its watershed management programs and support its municipal partners on matters related to greenspace land use planning decisions;**

**AND WHEREAS TRCA's understanding and approach to natural heritage management has continued to evolve in response to advancements in ecosystem science and TRCA is updating its natural heritage system to ensure it incorporates new information, the latest science, data and tools available;**

**THEREFORE staff presentation and draft background report on the update of the natural heritage system be received for Regional Watershed Alliance information and input;**

**THAT the *Greenspace and Ecosystem Services Working Group* of RWA consider integrating the natural heritage system update as a key component of their work;**

**AND FURTHER THAT any future community consultation on the updated draft natural heritage system be coordinated with TRCA's municipal partners through the Municipal Comprehensive Review Process;**

**AND THAT the Greenspace and Ecosystem Services Working Group and the RWA be advised of Municipal Comprehensive Review/Official Plan Review consultation dates once these are known.**

### BACKGROUND

Natural heritage planning has evolved over the last few decades in response to an improved understanding of landscape ecology and the extent to which urban development can impact ecological function and biodiversity. Early natural heritage planning focused solely on protecting the most significant natural areas on the landscape. This progressed into recognizing the need to identify, protect and restore connected and expanded natural areas as natural heritage systems. Most recently a more integrated approach to natural heritage planning has emerged, one that considers the whole landscape mosaic, including the built portion, for its ability to support biodiversity and other ecological functions and services. TRCA has been at the forefront of this evolution, ensuring that TRCA and its municipal partners have relevant and scientifically

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defensible information and support to make informed watershed management and land use planning decisions.

### Protection of Significant Natural Features

In 1982 the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) completed an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) study. This study identified areas of environmental significance and provided direction for their recognition and management.

The original ESA program was updated in 1993 to reflect contemporary ecological theory of the time, particularly with regards to recognizing the negative ecological impacts of fragmented and ecologically isolated natural features.

The 1996 Provincial Policy Statement (amended in 1997) provided natural heritage policy direction that required identifying and protecting significant natural features from impacts associated with land use change.

Identifying and protecting significant natural areas through programs such as the TRCA ESA initiative and the land use planning process helped secure and protect several important natural features. However, the ecological data collected by TRCA through the late 1990s and early 2000s as part of the ESA program highlighted an alarming reduction in biodiversity as urbanization continued.

### Natural Heritage System Planning

This new understanding, along with advancements in landscape ecology and geographic information systems, helped TRCA and others recognize that a new approach to natural heritage planning was needed in order to protect and, if possible, enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services in a rapidly urbanizing region.

TRCA began the development of the Terrestrial Natural Heritage System Strategy (TNHSS). This strategy, endorsed in 2007, used landscape ecology principles and spatial modeling tools to identify a connected and expanded natural heritage system that would help to maintain and restore regional biodiversity. It also explicitly recognized the importance of biodiverse and functioning natural systems in providing ecosystem services important to the well-being of the people and communities within the region.

Several provincial planning documents, including the updated Provincial Policy Statement (2005, 2014), the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2002, updated 2017), and the Greenbelt Plan (2005, updated 2017) have identified the need for natural system planning.

Over the past ten years TRCA has been supporting our municipal partners as they have incorporated natural systems into their official plans and other planning documents.

Although the protection of significant natural features remains an important part of natural heritage planning, the identification of connected and robust natural systems as part of the land use planning process has resulted in a more comprehensive and successful approach to natural heritage protection which has, in part, helped slow the trend of biodiversity loss.

### Green Infrastructure

In addition to recognizing the importance of identifying and protecting natural heritage systems, the last 10 years has also seen greater attention focused on how the built portion of the landscape can be designed and managed to improve biodiversity and other ecosystem functions and services. Implementation of green infrastructure outside of natural areas (e.g. green roofs, street trees, community gardens) has emerged as an important way to view and manage natural

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vegetative systems as vital infrastructure to support ecosystem function and the health and well-being of human communities. The 2014 Provincial Policy Statement defines green infrastructure this way:

*Natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. Green infrastructure can include components such as natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs.*

Over the past 10 years TRCA has been partnering with many of its municipalities in the development of urban forest studies. These studies have helped to understand the current condition of the urban forest, quantify the benefits the forest provides and outline management recommendations.

The most recent update to the growth plan for the greater golden horseshoe (2017) recognizes the importance of green infrastructure in helping to support the establishment of complete communities and improve resiliency to climate change.

### **RATIONALE**

In 2018 TRCA began updating its 2007 natural heritage system. The update will draw from a number of new advancements in science and practice, both locally and globally, in landscape ecology, urban ecology, and conservation planning along with updated data and advanced modelling and GIS techniques.

The update will incorporate a number of new analyses and components including:

1. Partner municipalities NHS(s) as appropriate.
2. Existing climate change vulnerabilities of terrestrial and aquatic systems
3. Terrestrial biodiversity, habitat, and connectivity needs under current and future urbanization (including green infrastructure) and climate change scenarios
4. Aquatic biodiversity, habitat, and connectivity needs under current and future urbanization and climate scenarios
5. Critical hydrological linkages between aquatic and terrestrial systems under current and future urbanization and climate change scenarios
6. Other ecosystem services as co-benefits provided by current and future landscape under current and future urbanization and climate change scenarios

This update will define a connected natural heritage system as well as identify green infrastructure opportunities within the built portion of the landscape, therefore allowing for a comprehensive approach to natural heritage planning that considers how the entire landscape mosaic can contribute to biodiversity objectives.

### **FINANCIAL DETAILS**

The update to the natural heritage system is fully funded by municipal capital levy.

### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

The comprehensive update to the natural heritage system will be complete in 2020. However, there are three distinct phases to the update each with its own discrete deliverables. Therefore, as new analysis is complete it will be available to inform implementation opportunities as they arise including incorporation into watershed plans and informing municipal conformity requirements.

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Staff to work with RWA's Greenspace and Ecosystem Services Working Group to incorporate key milestones into their workplan. The Regional Watershed Alliance will be kept informed of progress on the update and will be asked to provide feedback at key points during the process.

Staff to work with TRCA's Municipal partners to ensure coordination of any future consultation needs through the Municipal Comprehensive Review Process.

**Report prepared by: Noah Gaetz, extension 5348**

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**Date: October 24, 2018**

### Section III – Items for the Information of the Alliance

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance  
Meeting #3/18, Wednesday, November 14, 2018

**FROM:** Chandra Sharma, Director, Watershed Strategies

**RE:** **BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADMINISTRATIVE BY-LAW**  
Required Compliance with the *Conservation Authorities Act*

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#### KEY ISSUE

Receipt of staff report on the approved Board of Directors Administrative By-law and impacts on the Regional Watershed Alliance.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS the *Conservation Authorities Act (Act)* amendment requires conservation authorities to have administrative practices that meet the requirements of Section 19.1 of the *Act*;**

**AND WHEREAS the Authority approved the Board of Directors Administrative By-law on September 28, 2018;**

**AND WHEREAS the Regional Watershed Alliance is bound by the rules and procedures outlined in the By-law;**

**THEREFORE IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the staff report on the Board of Directors Administrative By-law and its impacts on the Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA) be received.**

#### RATIONALE

At Authority Meeting #8/17, held on October 27, 2017 the Terms of Reference for the Regional Watershed Alliance was approved. Further, at RWA Meeting #1/17, held on November 15, 2017, Resolution #R5/17 was approved, in part, as follows:

*AND FURTHER THAT the Alliance provide input on compensation of members (Section 5) for staff consideration...*

*...AND THAT options for compensation for approved disbursements be considered and report back at the next RWA meeting.*

At Authority Meeting #7/18, held on September 28, 2018, the [Board of Directors Administrative By-law](#) was approved. The RWA Terms of Reference (ToR) are included with the By-laws as an official companion document; such ToR were not included with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's previous Rules of Conduct, and the requirement to follow the rules and procedures of the Authority was not formally laid out.

As a result of the new By-law, staff has made the required administrative changes to the ToR for the RWA to reflect the approved By-law, primarily to reflect the new name of the Authority, which is the Board of Directors.

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In addition, compensation guidelines have been expanded as per the November 15, 2018 request of the RWA. In this regard, Section 5.0 of the ToR - Compensation for Regional Watershed Alliance Members has been updated to reflect that “incidental childcare expenses as a result of attending Regional Watershed Alliance meetings or authorized business may be reimbursed where the Chair of the Alliance deems financial hardship would otherwise result, and such expenses shall be pre-approved by the Chair.”

The By-law formally adopted a Code of Conduct for Board Members, which also applies to RWA Members. The Code of Conduct is intended to enhance public confidence that Members operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy. It is also intended to assist Members in dealing with situations not adequately addressed or that may be ambiguous in existing TRCA resolutions, regulations, or policies and procedures. The Code of Conduct for Board Members outlines the expectations for Members when at TRCA meetings or acting on behalf of TRCA.

As TRCA is bound by the [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#), currently the expectation is that Members adhere to that Act and any such rules of their appointing agency. The Conflict of Interest rules and procedures included within the By-law are intended to assist Members in understanding their obligations. Members are required to review the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* on a regular basis.

### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

Staff and the Chair will ensure meetings are conducted in accordance to the By-law. The election of officers on the agenda for the same meeting as this staff report will follow the procedures outlined in the By-law. RWA Members are expected to review the full [By-law](#) to ensure there is a clear understanding of duties and responsibilities, and that Members act accordingly.

**Report prepared by: Kathy Stranks, extension 5264**

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**Date: October 9, 2018**

**Attachments: 1 – [Link to Board of Directors Administrative By-law](#)**

## Section I – Items for Regional Watershed Alliance Action

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance  
Meeting #3/18, Wednesday, November 14, 2018

**FROM:** Chandra Sharma, Director, Watershed Strategies Division

**RE:** **YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

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### KEY ISSUE

Confirmation and approval of Youth Council Executive members.

### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS** the Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA) has approved the framework for the Youth Council, including the structure of membership to be comprised of both “General” and “Executive” members.

**AND WHEREAS** the Youth Council Working Group, with staff support, has selected a final Executive membership comprised of 10 members for a term of 1 year;

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED** that the membership list for the Youth Council Executive, as appended, be confirmed and approved;

**AND THAT** the Youth Council Executive will meet on a monthly basis, and will provide direction to and identify priorities for the Youth Council for a one year term;

**AND FURTHER THAT** intake for the General membership is to remain open.

### BACKGROUND

The long-term success of efforts to advance environmental protection and sustainability in the Toronto region depends on the support of the region’s youth, both now and into the future. The TRCA Community Engagement Strategy highlights the importance of engaging youth and reflecting their unique perspectives in TRCA’s priorities and programs, and identifies the creation of a Youth Council, overseen by the Regional Watershed Alliance, as an important and immediate priority. Around the world, youth councils have been created by governments, community groups and non-profit organizations as a means of providing local youth with an opportunity to gain important skills, build capacity and network, while providing the sponsoring agencies with important input and perspectives from youth stakeholders.

At RWA meeting #2/17 held on February 21, 2018, the framework for the Youth Council was approved. In this framework, two tiers of Youth Council membership were described: general and executive membership. The general membership is open to all youth in TRCA’s jurisdiction. General members will be invited to participate in Youth Council meetings and events, but participation will be voluntary. Executive members are an application-based position. Executive members will be responsible for the development of priorities for action, communication with the general Youth Council membership, organizing meetings, and the development of a work plan for a one-year term.

There are four objectives that will guide the development of program activities for the Youth council: “Build Capacity and Engage Youth,” providing youth across the Toronto region with learning opportunities; “Build a Youth Network/Strengthen Existing Networks,” creating a broad network of youth in the region that is interested in environmental and sustainability issues; “Identify Youth Perspectives,” developing an understanding of youth opinion around current

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environmental issues and how these might be incorporated in the work of TRCA and its partners; and “Create fun opportunities for youth,” providing entertaining and engaging learning opportunities.

### **RATIONALE**

Recruitment materials were developed by the RWA Youth Council Working Group in consultation with staff. Applicants for the executive membership were also asked to answer two out of the four following questions:

- 1) Why are you interested in joining the Youth Council?
- 2) What would you like to accomplish as part of the Youth Council?
- 3) What would make you a good candidate for the Youth Council Executive?
- 4) What do you think is the biggest challenge faced by your neighbourhood or region right now? What would you do to help people understand and address that challenge?

Executive applicants were also invited to attach a resume, though this step was optional. Recruitment for both tiers of the Youth Council began online in mid-September, and applications for executive membership closed on October 15, 2018 (recruitment for general membership continues to remain open). Advertisement for the recruitment was carried out on Instagram and YouTube, and was circulated communicated through relevant TRCA networks.

In total, 19 applications for executive membership were received. These applications were evaluated by the Youth Council Working Group and staff. Considerations for members included: representation from across the jurisdiction, demographic factors, and merit based on the quality of application. The final members can be found in attachment 1. 75 applications for general membership have been received from across the jurisdiction (a breakdown by postal code can be seen in attachment 2), and region-wide recruitment of general Youth Council members will continue.

### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

- An inaugural meeting of Youth Council Executive Members is set for the month of November. At this meeting members will begin process of developing a work plan, and structure for monthly meetings.
- A meet-up for all Youth Council Members is to be set up for the month of November.

**Report prepared by: Kate Goodale, extension 5280**

**Emails: kate.goodale@trca.on.ca**

**For Information contact: Kate Goodale, extension 5280**

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**Date: October 23, 2018**

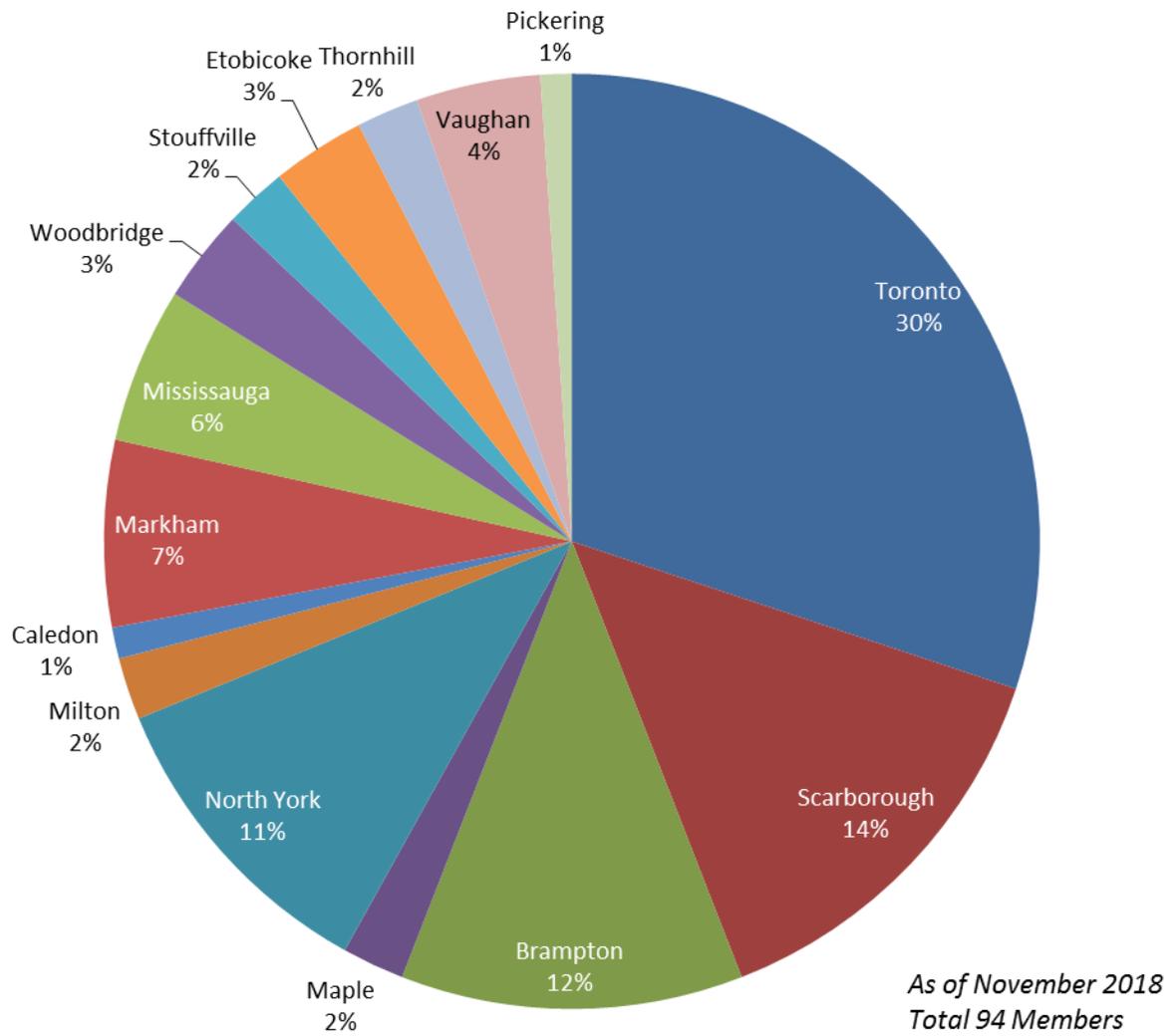
**Attachments: 2**

## Attachment 1

### 2018 Members of TRCA's Youth Council Executive

| <b>Name (First)</b> | <b>Name (Last)</b> | <b>Affiliation</b>               |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Adeena              | Afridi             | University Undergraduate Student |
| Ahmad (Imran)       | Amanullah          | University Graduate (Bachelor)   |
| Anjali              | Bapat              | University Graduate (Bachelor)   |
| Alana               | Cameron            | University Graduate (Bachelor)   |
| Adrian              | De Rushe           | College Student                  |
| Tua                 | Hytönen            | University Graduate (Bachelor)   |
| Wai Ying            | Lam                | University Graduate Student      |
| Eleni               | Pappas             | University Undergraduate Student |
| Ashwini             | Selvakumaran       | High School Student              |
| Haohan              | Zhang              | High School Student              |

### TRCA Youth Council Membership Current address based on postal code



## Section I – Items for Regional Watershed Alliance Action

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance  
Meeting #3/18, Wednesday, November 21, 2018

**FROM:** Chandra Sharma, Director, Watershed Strategies

**RE:** **2019 REGIONAL WATERSHED ALLIANCE MEETING SCHEDULE**

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### KEY ISSUE

A schedule of meeting dates is proposed for the Regional Watershed Alliance

### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the meetings for the Regional Watershed Alliance scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on the following dates be approved;**

**AND FURTHER THAT the meetings be held at 101 Exchange Ave., Vaughan, ON, unless otherwise noted.**

### 2019 DATES

**#4/18 Wednesday, February 13, 2019**

**#1/19 Wednesday, May 22, 2019**

**#2/19 Wednesday, September 11, 2019**

**#3/19 Wednesday, November 13, 2019**

### RATIONALE

A schedule of meetings is proposed to assist the Regional Watershed Alliance members. TRCA staff did an examination of the dates of municipality meetings to avoid conflict with council meetings within the Toronto, Peel, Durham and York Regions.

TRCA will provide meeting space to the Regional Watershed Alliance on a regular basis at 101 Exchange Ave., Vaughan, ON. This location is central to all the watersheds and easily accessible.

Working group meetings will be hosted at 101 Exchange Ave., via teleconference, or at other locations as appropriate and convenient to working groups.

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**Date: September 20, 2018**