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Items for the Action of the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee

TO: Chair and Members of the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee
Tuesday, June 07, 2022 Meeting

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: **PPG 2022 MEMBERSHIP GOALS AND TARGETS**
Update on Partners in Project Green 2022 Membership Goals

KEY ISSUE

To provide an update on Partners in Project Green's 2022 membership goals and planned tactics to achieve them.

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following information report on 2022 Membership Goals and Targets of Partners in Project Green be received.

BACKGROUND

Partners in Project Green: A Pearson Eco-Business Zone was launched in 2008 by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), with support from the Regional Municipalities of Peel and York, the City of Toronto and from the nearby business community to transform the employment lands surrounding Toronto Pearson and located within TRCA's Etobicoke-Mimico Creeks Watershed into an internationally recognized community of eco-friendly businesses.

The creation of Partners in Project Green (PPG) stemmed from an eco-business model recommendation identified in a 2006 joint TRCA and GTAA report that provided restoration strategies for the natural and aquatic systems surrounding Toronto Pearson. The PPG committee became a subcommittee of the Board of Directors of TRCA and has been undertaking a broad range of sustainability work within the Pearson Eco-Business Zone while expanding into nearby parts of Peel, York, and Toronto.

At Board of Directors Meeting #4/21, held on April 30, 2021, Resolution #A83/21 was approved as follows:

WHEREAS Partners in Project Green was launched in 2008 to advance the adoption of sustainability practices within the Pearson Airport economic zone;

AND WHEREAS a Strategic Refresh to the Partners in Project Green program was completed in 2019 that affirmed objectives related to the expansion and advancement of eco-business programming and services to additional economic clusters across TRCA's nine watersheds;

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following information report on progress updates related to revising the Partners in Project Green Membership Structure and value proposition be received.

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Below is a brief history of PPG Membership.

2008 – 2010: Membership was free. If a company had any type of engagement with PPG, they were considered a member.

2011 – 2015: Membership fees were nominal and referred to as subscription fees. In 2011, subscription fees generated \$1,600. Targets were also low, starting at \$5,000 in 2011 and moving to \$15,000 in 2013.

2015 – 2020: The current Membership program was created, with fees from \$350 - \$2,550. From 2015 – 2020, the average number of members has been 89, though in 2021 there were 65. This was due in part to the impacts of COVID-19 on member businesses. Revenue generation has also declined; from a high of \$94,500 in 2016 to a low of \$27,000 in 2020. This was due in part to declining membership rates, as well as an increase in complimentary memberships, in 2020, work by TRCA staff and input from PPG leadership highlighted the opportunity to enhance value for members and to increase membership rates through a variety of means

2020 - 2021: Membership revenue in 2021 was \$33,000, with an additional \$30,500 in program revenue. The Membership structure was revised following consultations with members, review of leading membership associations and membership best practices, and discussions with TRCA and PPG leadership. The revised structure has been gradually implemented since November 2021, with a complete transition occurring in April 2022.

RATIONALE

TRCA staff and PPG leadership are working to re-energize the PPG network through revising the membership value proposition and improving fiscal responsibility by continuously diversifying funding sources and looking at new business models. Key pillars in this strategy have been the revision of the membership structure, a continued emphasis on exploring relevant grant opportunities with partners, the introduction of new consortiums, and the development of a new website and member management portal.

To enhance the value our Members receive, the membership structure has been updated as follows:

- Membership will be required to access high value PPG content, while ensuring the public site delivers meaningful sustainability resources and supports, especially for small-to-medium sized businesses
- Member benefits will be substantially expanded in terms of amount of locked content by Membership tier, discounts to TRCA managed events and programs, and increased leadership and recognition benefits
- Complimentary memberships have been eliminated
- Member tiers are now:
 - **Community Access** - free access to high value tools and resources to drive sustainability results in your organization
 - **Individual memberships** – Student, Early Professional and Young Professional with appropriately discounted rates to promote access and involvement
 - **Corporate memberships**, by employee counts:
 - Member
 - Member Plus (Membership plus access to one Consortium or program)

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- All Access (Membership plus access to all Consortiums and programs)
- **Funding Members** - organizations that provide financial support beyond membership fees
- **Advisory Members** – organizations that provide support as program advisors, communications partners, and the like

Table 1: 2022 Membership Pricing Grid

Employee Counts	Member	Member Plus	Member All Access
Student	\$29	N/A	N/A
Young Professional	\$49	N/A	N/A
Professional	\$99	N/A	N/A
2 – 9	\$349	\$524	\$1,047
10 – 24	\$449	\$674	\$1,347
25 - 75	\$649	\$974	\$1,947
75 – 149	\$949	\$1,424	\$2,847
150 – 299	\$1,599	\$2,399	\$4,797
300 – 499	\$2,199	\$3,299	\$6,597
500+	\$2,599	\$3,899	\$7,797

PPG currently has a total of 60 paid Members, 6 of which are Funding Members (Region of Peel, City of Toronto, Region of York, Toronto Pearson, Town of Caledon, and TELUS). In addition, to paid members, there are currently 7 Advisory Members. The 2022 membership goal was established as 80 in late 2021.

A key strategy in the new Membership structure is enhanced theme-based Consortiums. The long-standing Energy Leaders Consortium will continue to run, with current participants transitioning to the Member Plus tier. The Circular Economy Leadership Consortium is launching in March, and a Climate Resiliency Consortium is in the planning stages, expected to launch in Q3.

We are slowly transitioning to the new model, with new Members joining under the new format and current Members transitioning at their renewal date. As of May 2, 2022, the Member tier breakdowns and targets are in the table below. The tier targets exceed the total Member target of 80 to ensure we meet our base goal.

Table 2: Paid Member Tier Breakdowns and Targets

Member Tier	Current	Target
Individual	0	10
Member	29	35
Member Plus	23	40
Member All Access	2	5
Funding Members	6	6
TOTALS	60	96

It is expected that basic Member numbers will remain fairly level as some transition to Member

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Plus status. While we expect some new organizations to join at the Member level, the current strategy will focus on increasing membership through program engagement, resulting in higher numbers at the Member Plus level.

Table 3: Member Plus Tier by Program

Member Plus by Program	Current ¹	Target
Energy Leaders Consortium	18	18
Circular Economy Leaders Consortium	8	10
Climate Resiliency Program	0	5
People Power Challenge	3	7
TOTALS	29	40

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategies set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 1 – Green the Toronto region’s economy

Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship

Strategy 7 – Build partnerships and new business models

Strategy 8 – Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Revenues estimated from the revised Membership structure are forecasted to be \$150,000 in 2022, which is an increase of 136% over 2021 membership and program revenue (\$63,639). As of May 2, \$52,946 (35% of projection) has been generated. With the new structure officially launched on April 22nd, we are currently on track to achieve the projected outcome.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

The following are planned tactics to ensure PPG meets the above goals:

1. A new streamlined website and member management portal were launched on April 22, 2022 (Earth Day).
2. A communications strategy is being developed that will target specific programs for marketing blitzes throughout the year, driving membership through program engagement.
3. The PPG Fall Forum is being planned for return in Q4 2022, and membership recruitment is a key goal.
4. PPG is actively seeking partnerships and speaking opportunities with Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, and other organizations that work with our target audience. At the date of this report, speaking opportunities and other promotional activities have been secured with Ontario Chamber of Commerce and Brampton Board of Trade.

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¹ This includes organizations that have currently paid under the new membership structure, as well as those who are expected to join as Member Plus at their next renewal date.