Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Friday, April 14, 2023 Meeting

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

RE: **2023-2026 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY AND ROADMAP**

KEY ISSUE
Presentation of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) 2023-2026 Information Technology Strategy and Roadmap.

RECOMMENDATION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the 2023-2026 Information and Technology Strategy and Roadmap, be received.

BACKGROUND
In 2022, the Information Technology and Records Management (ITRM) business unit of Corporate Services initiated the development of a new IT Strategy and Roadmap that would help guide technology initiatives and investments over the next four years and develop a roadmap for the future. The IT Strategy and Roadmap is an enabling strategy to support the delivery of the TRCA's Strategic Plan. The term of the IT Strategy also aligns to the first phase of the strategic plan and playbook, focusing on the next four years of priorities within the work plan.

The strategy development process was based on a traditional approach to allow for a high degree of engagement with organizational stakeholders, as well as to provide ITRM staff the opportunity to learn as much as possible about the organization, its technology needs and the environmental factors impacting how we deliver services. The process involved substantial collaboration and support from staff across the organization, encompassing:

- More than 25 interviews of divisional leadership and management;
- A survey of IT service quality and customer service priorities;
- A Digital Maturity survey to assess the readiness of the organization to advance transformative projects;
- A survey of IT functions to assess service delivery across a cross section of IT domains;
- Environmental analysis workshops to analyze key pressures impacting the organization; and
- Multiple workshops and divisional meetings to review IT priorities and project readiness.

The contributions from stakeholders during the research and analysis phases, as well

as during the strategy framework and workplan development, helped to build a comprehensive set of priorities to focus projects and technology investments through the term of the strategy. The workplan development workshops identified several actions areas for ITRM to support the organization in developing its capability to adopt digital transformation through skills development, resource management and project planning and delivery.

RATIONALE

The framework of the new 2023-2026 IT Strategy and Roadmap consists of five strategic priorities covering both business-centric and technology-centric needs:

Strategic Priority	Description
Data Insights	Developing the capabilities of the organization to make data-driven, science-based decisions to better support its goals.
Business Modernization	Increasing organizational capabilities to deliver services through the modernization of business solutions.
Digital Services and Engagement	Supporting stakeholder engagement and the organizational transparency through the adoption of digital technologies.
Technical Modernization	Supporting foundational technology services for the organization through effective lifecycle management and service planning.
Information Management & Data Security	Building organizational resiliency through an effective cybersecurity and information asset management program.

Table 1 - IT Strategy: Strategic Priorities

These priorities form the basis of grouping business and technology initiatives to focus resource planning and better drive outcomes and measure success.

Supporting Themes & Actions

To support the delivery of these priorities, the IT Strategy also identifies three action areas that focus on developing the broader digital maturity of the organization.

Supporting Theme	Description
Digital Readiness	Developing the digital maturity of the organization to better adopt transformative technologies through: • Skills development and technical training • Adopting a customer-centric approach • Promote innovation and experimentation
Resource Capacity	Optimizing the use of resources to implement and support technology through:

	• Encouraging collaboration and the adoption of common platforms • Developing effective support models to manage technology platforms • Identifying roles and staffing needs to meet digital service needs
Architecture and Standards	Optimizing technology investments across the organization through: • Establishing a program for technology lifecycle planning • Defining technology standards and policies to guide investment decisions • Developing an IT audit program to monitor and evaluate services

Table 2 - IT Strategy: Supporting Themes & Actions

These themes will focus on the policy and planning activities of the ITRM business unit, as well as the IT&IM Working Group.   They will require a broader collaboration across divisions on processes and governance.

Setting Workplan Priorities and Timelines

The IT Strategy workplan was developed collaboratively with the divisions, who participated in multiple workshops to evaluate backlog projects based on strategic value and readiness. The workplan focuses on quarterly activities through 2023 and 2024, with annual targets in the final two years of the Strategy.   The workplan will be reviewed quarterly for progress and updated to reflect changes due to:

- Intake of new priority divisional projects and corporate initiatives
- Budget and/or resource impacts
- Project scheduling impacts of inflight projects
- Review and reassessment of project priorities

The workplan includes projects that are business-delivered, ITRM-delivered, as well as jointly delivered initiatives to provide visibility to the utilization of internal resources, as well as the interdependency of initiatives.

Relationship to TRCA's 2022-2034 Strategic Plan
This report supports the following Pillars and Outcomes set forth in TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan:

Pillar 4 Service Excellence:

4.1 A strong and skilled workforce

Pillar 4 Service Excellence:

4.2 Provide and manage an efficient and adaptable organization

Pillar 4 Service Excellence:

  4.4 Transparent decision making and accountable results

FINANCIAL DETAILS

The IT Roadmap and Workplan contains many projects that will transform how TRCA engages with its customers and stakeholders, utilizes data and promotes a continuous modernization and upkeep of technology assets. It will require the investment of staff and financial resources in order to implement in order to implement these projects. In addition to the upfront investments, projects may have an ongoing operational impact in order to maintain services.

ITRM will work with TRCA business units to plan new technology initiatives, develop effective ongoing support models to maximize their returns, as well as to manage the eventual replacements of technology assets and systems.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

Over the next four years of the IT Strategy, ITRM will work with divisional stakeholders to monitor progress and adapt the workplan to deliver on the key priorities and projects. The Strategy will also continue to be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to support and enable progress on the pillars of TRCA's corporate strategic plan.

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Date: February 15, 2023