

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

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Executive Committee  
Friday, October 6, 2023 Meeting

**FROM:** Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

**RE: 2023 MID-YEAR FUNDING AND GRANTS PROGRAM UPDATE**

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### KEY ISSUE

To provide a mid-year update to Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)'s Board of Directors on the Funding and Grants Program and to highlight program successes as of July 31.

### RECOMMENDATION:

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the staff report highlighting the mid-year Funding and Grants Program update for 2023, be received.**

### BACKGROUND

The Funding and Grants Program within the Strategic Business Planning and Performance business unit provides timely and seamless support for all TRCA and Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation (TRCF) funding and grant applications. This program provides opportunities for TRCA programs and services to diversify their revenue streams through additional support provided through the centralized funding and grants team. The Funding and Grants team also assists in strengthening leadership and collaboration among all divisions to ensure consensus in the prioritization and strategic positioning of all new funding opportunities. The team also plays a key role in working with municipal partners and stakeholders in confirming TRCA support for partner funding applications that align with TRCA's mandate.

### RATIONALE

*Attachment 1* provides a summary of the status of funding applications submitted as of July 31, 2023, which are organized based on their current status of approved, under review, and declined grants.

### Relationship to TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following Pillar and Outcome set forth in TRCA's 2023-2034 Strategic Plan:

#### **Pillar 4 Service Excellence:**

4.2 Provide and manage an efficient and adaptable organization

### FINANCIAL DETAILS

Between January 1, 2023 and July 31, 2023, the Funding and Grants Program facilitated a total of 60 grant submissions with a total request of \$12.8M. The additional revenue and support generated through the funding and grants program help to

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provide projects and programs with an increasingly sustainable business model by reducing reliance on partner municipality funding while also leveraging municipal funding to increase its overall impact. Between January 1, 2023 and July 31, 2023, \$2.6M in municipal funding was leveraged towards projects successfully supported by grants and other funding.

TRCA currently has \$11.7M in grant applications under review with various funding programs. Throughout 2023, TRCA received notice that \$5.1M had been awarded through the Funding and Grants program, and that \$1.9M has been declined. This indicates a program success rate of 73% as of July 31, 2023.

**Table 1: Mid-Year Grant Program Update**

<b>Grant Status</b>	<b># of Grants</b>	<b>Approved/Requested Funding \$ (000's)</b>
Under Review Grants	24	11,685
Awarded Grants	28	5,071
Declined Grants	22	1,919

The Funding and Grants program successfully generated revenues for a wide variety of projects and programs across TRCA's divisions. Excluding grant programs with organization-wide or multi-divisional benefits (such as Canada Summer Jobs), over \$1M in grant revenue was generated for each of Development & Engineering and Restoration & Infrastructure. Education & Training programs received more than \$500K in grant funding, while Conservation Parks & Lands continued its successful delivery of over \$5M in funding for capital projects awarded funding in 2022.

**Table 2: Mid-Year Grant Awards by Division**

<b>TRCA Division</b>	<b># of Grants</b>	<b>Approved Funding \$ (000's)</b>
Education & Training	8	611
Conservation Parks & Lands	2	9
Development & Engineering	2	1,030
Restoration & Infrastructure	14	2,472

Early this year, the Funding and Grants team was able to leverage its existing funding through the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund (NSCSF) to secure additional funding in support of the restoration of the Brock North Headwater Complex. First, the Funding and Grants team worked with Conservation Ontario staff – who are administering the NSCSF on behalf of Environment and Climate Change Canada – to secure additional unspent funds from other organizations participating in the fund. Then, the team successfully leveraged the NSCSF as matching funds to secure additional funding for the project. Altogether, over \$1M was secured in this way, by successfully negotiating with multiple stakeholders to cover a significant portion of the total project budget.

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TRCA staff also worked closely with staff from Conservation Ontario, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Natural Resources Canada to secure nearly half a million dollars in support for a jurisdiction-wide LiDAR acquisition project in partnership with several other conservation authorities.

In addition to the funding applications submitted and/or awarded in the 2023 fiscal year, TRCA continued to manage successful grants and funding from previous fiscal years that were still active in 2023. TRCA had budgeted a total of \$22.4M in grant revenues for 2023, which is representative of all sources of grant funding.

As of July 31, 2023, TRCA had earned 33% of its budgeted grant revenue for 2023. The percentage of revenue earned appears low because of the timing of invoicing for project supported by high-value grants, including the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund and Canada Community Revitalization Fund. TRCA staff continue to work closely with federal program officers to claim grant funding and will continue to report on the status of these projects.

A significant portion of TRCA's grant revenues for 2023 was awarded in 2022 through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario's Canada Community Revitalization Fund. Over \$5.5M in grant revenue between 2022 and 2023 has enabled teams across TRCA to improve and update critical infrastructure at ten sites across TRCA's jurisdiction.

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

As detailed above, the Funding and Grants team has recently found success in coordinating between multiple provincial, federal, and non-government stakeholders to leverage existing funding towards additional grants to complete TRCA projects using alternative revenue sources to municipal levy and self-generated revenues. The team will continue to work closely with program staff across federal and provincial departments and ministries to leverage existing funding where possible and identify opportunities for out-of-cycle grant applications.

The Funding and Grants team will also continue to work closely with Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation and its partner municipalities to support joint interests. TRCA staff are currently collaborating to implement a sponsorship program which will enable priority TRCA projects to benefit from corporate support. TRCA staff are also exploring opportunities to put forward joint applications and co-applicant submissions wherever possible to ensure that the co-benefits of associated projects will be realized. This work to support partner applications through letters of support, participating in meetings with granting agencies, and reviewing partner funding submissions, has helped to secure significant federal and provincial investments for projects that advance TRCA and partner objectives across our jurisdiction.

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**Date: August 15, 2023**

**Attachments: 1**

Attachment 1: Mid-Year Funding and Grants Program Update