

Section I – Items for Regional Watershed Alliance Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance
Meeting #2/18, Wednesday, May 23, 2018

FROM: Ryan Ness, Humber Watershed Specialist and Corporate Strategy Lead

RE: **REGIONAL WATERSHED ALLIANCE COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES (2018 – 2019) AND ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS**

KEY ISSUE

Approve collective priorities and associated opportunities for action for the Regional Watershed Alliance (2018 – 2019) and establishment of working groups.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS The Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA) members participated in a facilitated discussion with staff during the last meeting of the RWA on February 21, 2018, to identify collective priorities and opportunities for action as presented and developed from initial member input at the inaugural meeting on November 15, 2017;

THEREFORE IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the RWA members receive the final summary prepared by staff of the facilitated discussion;

THAT the collective priorities and associated opportunities for action contained therein be approved and accepted as the key priorities for the work of the RWA in 2018-2019;

THAT the following three Working Groups, comprised of interested RWA members and other interested parties, be formed around the collective priorities of:

- a) Greenspace and Ecosystem Services;
- b) Flooding and Extreme Weather Outreach; and
- c) Integrated Community/Watershed Planning and Civic Engagement;

THAT membership on these groups be solicited via RWA online platform;

AND FURTHER THAT these working groups will meet on a as needed basis, no more than monthly, to develop a work plan and identify activities that will address these priorities though consultation with TRCA staff.

BACKGROUND

At the inaugural meeting of the RWA, members were asked: “If you could select one regional sustainability related theme that the Regional Watershed Alliance would focus on, what would it be and why?” RWA members provided their responses and staff recorded detailed notes to capture the breadth and nuance of their ideas and through subsequent analysis identified three common themes or “collective priorities”. These three themes are as follows: 1) Increasing the understanding and influencing the perceived monetary and intrinsic value of nature and greenspace, both regionally and locally, 2) Increasing the preparedness and protection of communities from existing and future flooding and extreme weather events, and 3) Improving the integration of environmental protection and community well-being in land use planning and design

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and growth management decisions. These themes were also assessed for their alignment in the TRCA Strategic Plan Building the Living City.

During the last meeting of the RWA on February 21, 2018, members participated in a facilitated discussion with staff to review the collective priorities and to identify opportunities for action by the RWA. During this facilitated discussion, each of the three themes was the subject of further conversation and development, facilitated by staff. RWA members were asked to review each priority, refine the scope of the theme, and identify needs and gaps of possible ideas for action. To ensure all interests were captured, members were also invited to provide any additional ideas and potential priorities which were not connected to the three themes. Staff analyzed and synthesized the input received and developed a summary of each of the four discussions, which were posted on the online collaborative platform Basecamp for further feedback from RWA members.

It should be noted that collective priorities and opportunities actions are a starting point for 2018-2019 RWA work planning, and do not limit the scope of work or possible interests of RWA members and working groups. Staff will maintain a continual list of RWA members' interests and priorities will be maintained to incorporate ongoing suggestions for future work planning.

RATIONALE

As per the RWA Terms of Reference, members have the opportunity to help TRCA advance its strategic goals and priorities, as well as to voice their interests and undertake activities that align with those broader goals. Section 6.0 of the Terms of Reference of the Regional Watershed Alliance states:

The watershed/waterfront working groups will be subcommittees of the RWA and formed as deemed appropriate by the Regional Watershed Alliance. These committees may solicit local community representatives or experts to participate as needed. Mandate of these subcommittees can be watershed-wide or specifically focused around projects such as watershed plans. The Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups will report to the Regional Watershed Alliance. The supporting TRCA staff will coordinate regular reports to the Regional Watershed Alliance on the activities of these groups.

Items pertaining to the working groups will be a standing item on the agenda of Regional Watershed Alliance meetings.

The collective priorities and opportunities for action identified by the members and summarized by staff in Attachment 1, appended to this report, represent the basis from which the RWA can undertake its work in 2018-2019 through the formation of working groups and the development of work plans for each group.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

- Following approval of the facilitated discussion summary of 2018-2019 collective priorities and opportunities for action, the RWA membership shall establish working groups which, with assistance from TRCA staff, will be responsible for developing and implementing 2018-2019 work plans
- Members will be invited to volunteer to participate in these working groups. Those members who elect to participate in a working group will be responsible for providing the RWA with updates regarding accomplishments of working groups.

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- Working groups will meet on an as needed, but no more than monthly, basis. Meetings can be held at TRCA facilities, RWA members will work with TRCA staff to book those facilities.
- TRCA staff will support working groups through attendance at meetings, booking facilities, and through program support as identified by the working group. The working group will be responsible for the development of meeting agendas, and work priorities through consultation with TRCA staff.

Report prepared by: Matthew Volpintesta, extension 5209; Kate Goodale

Emails: mvolpintesta@trca.on.ca; kgoodale@trca.on.ca

For Information contact: Arlen Leeming; Ryan Ness

Emails: aleeming@trca.on.ca; rness@trca.on.ca

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Attachments: 1