

## Item 9.1

### Items for the Action of the Outdoor Education Task Force

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Outdoor Education Task Force  
Meeting #1/19, Monday, October 07, 2019

**FROM:** Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

**RE:** **OVERVIEW OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION TASK FORCE**  
Overview of Mandate, Objectives, Workplan and Timelines

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#### KEY ISSUE

Overview of the mandate, objectives, workplan and timelines of the Outdoor Education Task Force.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS** at its Meeting #16/18 held on July 20, 2018, TRCA's Board of Directors approved the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Outdoor Education Task Force comprised of elected officials from local school boards and TRCA's Board of Directors;

**AND WHEREAS** as its Meeting #5/19 held on May 24, 2019, representatives from area school board Boards of Trustees and TRCA's Board of Directors have been duly appointed;

**AND WHEREAS** on May 6, 2019 the Province of Ontario passed Bill 108: *More Homes, More Choices Act*, which outlines changes to the Conservation Authorities Act;

**AND WHEREAS** it is anticipated that the Province of Ontario will release further Regulations or Policy Statements related to Bill 108 and the programs and services of conservation authorities, including outdoor education activities;

**AND WHEREAS** the Outdoor Education Task Force has been convened to study, develop and recommend strategic future directions related to natural science, conservation and environmental out-of-classroom learning in the Toronto region;

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** the following Mandate, Objectives and Timelines of the Outdoor Education Task Force be endorsed;

**AND THAT** the Outdoor Education Task Force Work Plan and Timelines as outlined in this report be approved.

#### BACKGROUND

At Authority Meeting #6/18, held on July 20, 2018, Resolution #A141/18 was approved, in part, as follows:

*...THAT creation of the multi-stakeholder Toronto and Region Outdoor Education Task Force ... be approved, with an initial term of 18 months;*

At Board of Directors Meeting #5/19, held on May 24, 2019, Resolution #A81/19 was approved, in part, as follows:

*...THAT the following School Board Trustees be appointed to the Outdoor Education*

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*Task Force for the eighteen (18) month period commencing September 2019 to February 2021.*

- *Durham Catholic District School Board: Trustee Morgan Ste. Marie*
- *York Region District School Board: Trustee Cynthia Cordova*
- *York Catholic District School Board: Trustee Jennifer Wigston*
- *Peel District School Board: Trustee Will Davies*
- *Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board: Trustee Frank Di Cosola*
- *Toronto District School Board: Trustee Anu Sriskandarajah*
- *Toronto Catholic District School Board: Trustee Garry Tanuan*
- *Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir: Chair Melinda Chartrand*

At the same Board of Directors meeting, City of Brampton Regional Councillor Rowena Santos was appointed the as TRCA Board of Directors representative on the Outdoor Education Task Force (Task Force).

The Durham District School Board and Conseil scolaire Viamonde have not to date provided nominations for appointment to the Task Force. TRCA staff will continue to engage these Boards to secure a nomination to the Task Force and will recommend appointment of members of these Boards to TRCA's Board of Directors upon receiving a nomination by their Board of Trustees

With an eighteen (18) month mandate, the Task Force is comprised of Trustees from local school boards and TRCA's Board of Directors to study, develop, and recommend strategic future directions related to out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment in the Toronto region.

As outlined in *Appendix A - Toronto and Region Outdoor Education Task Force Terms of Reference*, approved at Authority Meeting #6/18, held on July 20, 2018, Resolution #A141/18, the objectives of the Task Force are to:

- Develop a framework for the long-term provision of out-of-classroom learning experiences related to natural science and the environment that meets the needs of the student population to the year 2040;
- Provide recommendations to strengthen and enable partnerships and collaboration between public sector agencies that maximize the use and value of public assets and infrastructure;
- Provide expertise and recommendations on strengthening experiential connections between the urban and natural environments, with consideration for the impact of urban intensity on student access to greenspace and natural systems;
- Provide recommendations related to long-term financial sustainability, including, but not limited to:
  - Government funding programs;
  - Private grants, fundraising and endowments;
  - Alternative business models (co-operatives, social enterprises, etc.);
  - Other funding models.

### **RATIONALE**

Under S.197 of the Education Act (RSO 1990), school boards are enabled to enter into agreements with conservation authorities for the use of lands, buildings and personnel for the purposes of providing natural science, conservation or other out-of-classroom programs. Additionally, S.197 also contains provisions for two or more school boards to enter into agreements for the shared use and delivery of natural science programs and other out-of-classroom learning programs. It is through this legislation that the current system of natural science schools, outdoor education centres, environmental education centres and conservation field centres that facilitate student out-of-classroom learning has developed.

The Task Force has been convened in order to establish a strategic planning framework for the long-term provision of out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation or the environment that serve students of the Toronto region while maximizing the use and value of public assets and infrastructure. The workplan below outlines the activities of the Task Force and associated timelines.

### **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 3 – Rethink greenspace to maximize its value**

**Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship**

**Strategy 6 – Tell the story of the Toronto region**

**Strategy 7 – Build partnerships and new business models**

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

With the Task Force being convened for 18 months, TRCA staff have prepared a draft fourteen (14) month work plan and meetings schedule that outlines key milestones and deliverables, including timelines and a schedule for reporting to TRCA's Board of Directors and participating Boards of Trustees.

#### **October 2019**

- Overview
  - Introductions
    - Attendees
    - Role of TRCA
  - Background
  - Goals and Objectives
- Election of Chair
- Staff Presentation and Report: Overview of Outdoor Education Task Force
- Staff Presentation and Report: Overview of Current Outdoor Education System
- Roundtable/Open Forum Discussion

*Minutes to TRCA Board of Directors and participating Boards of Trustees: November 2019*

#### **December 2019 or January 2020**

- Staff Presentation and Report: Current State
- Staff Presentation and Report: Other Jurisdictions
- Facilitated Visioning Session Part One: Principles, Values and Destination
- Establishment of Working Group:
  - Principles, Values and Destination

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*Minutes to TRCA Board of Directors and Participating Boards of Trustees: February 2020*

### **February 2020**

- Working Group Presentation and Report: Visioning Session Part One – Principles, Values and Destination
- Facilitated Visioning Session Part Two: Models and Mechanisms
- Establishment of Working Group:
  - Models and Mechanisms

*Minutes to TRCA Board of Directors and participating Boards of Trustees: April 2020*

### **May 2020**

- Working Group Presentation and Report: Visioning Session Part Two – Models and Mechanisms
- Discussion: Recommendations and Policy Statements
- Establishment of Working Group:
  - Recommendations, Framework and Policy Statements

*Minutes to TRCA Board of Directors and participating Boards of Trustees: June 2020*

### **October 2020**

- Working Group Presentation and Report: Recommendations, Framework and Policy Statements
- Discussion: Next Steps

*Minutes to TRCA Board of Directors and participating Boards of Trustees: November 2020*

### **December 2020**

- Final Report

*Final report and presentations to TRCA Board of Directors and Boards of Trustees: January - March 2021*

TRCA staff will provide secretariat functions, general coordination and staff support, and liaise with Task Force members and school board staff as needed.

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**Date: September 19, 2019**

**Attachments: 1**

**Attachment 1: Appendix – Toronto and Region Outdoor Education Task Force Terms of Reference**