

Section I – Items for Board of Directors Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors
Meeting #3/20, Friday, April 24, 2020

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

**RE: FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES' VISIONARY AWARD
APPLICATION**

KEY ISSUE

Acknowledgement and endorsement for application to have SNAP Program considered for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Visionary Award.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) has delivered the Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program in partnership with nine local and regional municipalities since 2009;

AND WHEREAS the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has released a call for applications to the Green Municipal Fund 20th Anniversary Visionary Award, which requires Board of Directors acknowledgement and endorsement of the application;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT TRCA Board of Directors acknowledge and endorse an application for the Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program to be considered for Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Fund 20th Anniversary Visionary Award;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to report back to the Board of Directors before year end on the next phase of the SNAP Program and proposed opportunities to expand the program to inform municipal budgeting discussions.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

As part of its 2020 Sustainable Communities Awards, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has created a Green Municipal Fund (GMF) 20th Anniversary Visionary Award. This award will be granted to an initiative that demonstrates how sustainability and innovation can generate long-term community change. Eligible initiatives must have been started or completed within the last 20 years and must demonstrate measurable environmental, social and economic benefits. Additionally, applicants must provide Board or Directors or Council acknowledgement and endorsement of the application.

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP) was launched in 2009 and is an excellent candidate to be recognized nationally by this award. TRCA developed SNAP in close collaboration with nine municipalities who would also be identified in the proposed award application. Staff from those municipalities are aware and supportive of the nomination. The nine municipalities include:

- City of Toronto;
- Region of Peel, City of Brampton, City of Mississauga and Town of Caledon; and
- Region of York, City of Richmond Hill, City of Markham and City of Vaughan.

Item 7.11

SNAP is a neighbourhood model for sustainable urban renewal and climate action and was developed to help municipalities overcome the challenges of retrofitting and renewing older neighbourhoods. The success of SNAP is rooted in a collaborative approach that aligns municipal priorities with local needs and interests that improves efficiencies, draws strong community support and builds trusted implementation partnerships for initiatives in public and private realms. Working with local stakeholders, SNAPs address a broad range of sustainability objectives by advancing strategies for:

- Home retrofits (*e.g. tree planting, local flood protection, rainwater harvesting*);
- Infrastructure renewal (*e.g. integration of environmental and social outcomes into parks, stormwater management facilities, roads*);
- Multi-unit residential, commercial and institutional revitalization (*e.g. sustainable landscaping, urban agriculture, building retrofits*); and
- Community resilience and leadership capacity (*e.g. neighbour connections, skills building, emergency preparedness*).

Since the initial development of the neighbourhood action planning model in 2009, TRCA has worked closely with its municipal partners and a diverse range of stakeholders on pilot SNAP action plans, implementation projects, strategies for scaling the model's successes and laying the foundation for the longer term program. In 2016 TRCA's Board endorsed the transition from pilot projects to a SNAP Program. Significant accomplishments have garnered recognition locally, nationally and internationally. This short video provides an overview of the Program and perspectives from diverse partners - <https://trca.ca/conservation/sustainable-neighbourhoods/>

SNAP Program highlights include:

- Toronto Foundation's 2012 Vital Ideas Award;
- C40 Cities Award Finalist and named to Cities100's top 100 list of innovative climate action projects worldwide in 2016;
- Canadian Society of Landscape Architects' 2016 National Award for Bayview Glen SNAP;
- Growing network of SNAP neighbourhood projects – 8 SNAPs in TRCA's jurisdiction, 5 more SNAP's in Ontario, and starting in 2019 the Netherlands government supports 17 Dutch municipalities in adopting TRCA's SNAP model;
- SNAP neighbourhood model is being recognized with increasing collaboration with municipal programs – e.g. City of Brampton established Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program and City of Toronto is aligning neighbourhood resilience pilots with SNAP;
- FCM awarded TRCA and nine interested municipalities a Transition 2050 grant under the Municipal Climate Innovation Program to support knowledge transfer of the neighbourhood model as an effective strategy for low carbon mobilization.

TRCA SNAP neighbourhood project highlights include:

- Home retrofit programs have achieved deeper engagement and measurable action (e.g. 17% of Black Creek SNAP neighbourhood homes have implemented 1,229 significant environmental and resiliency retrofits, including on average 2 stormwater management retrofit actions and 1.2 trees planted per home).
- Planned infrastructure projects have incorporated resident-inspired design enhancements to achieve greater environmental function and community amenities. Eight significant green infrastructure projects have been completed on public land, including boulevard bioswales, quality control stormwater management ponds, wetlands and raingardens, complemented with 1000's of trees and pollinator plants, trails, meditation gardens, art installations, educational signage, seating, etc.

Item 7.11

- Partnerships with private landowners and community groups have resulted in 32 green infrastructure and urban agriculture installations and other sustainability initiatives on 14 multi-unit residential properties and 18 commercial or institutional properties, with far-reaching benefits. In the San Romanoway towers in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood, for example, 70% of residents reported feeling more safe, >85% reported a positive impact on their mood, 61% confirmed they have been inspired to start a small business due to the project and 69% reported the project inspired them to fundraise for a community cause, as a result of SNAP's actions.
- SNAP projects have strengthened community resilience by fostering community connections and skills training, resulting in the resident-led formation of three formalized neighbourhood groups and a social enterprise.
- SNAP has built community capacity to sustain environmental work – at the San Romanoway tower revitalization project, every 1 hour of SNAP programming generated 19 hours of community volunteerism, totaling 35,000 hours of volunteerism over the past four years.
- Since 2009, over 11,400 people have been engaged toward sustainability actions across all SNAPs and 9,300 trees and shrubs have been planted, many on private land.
- Additionally, 264 skills training workshops have been delivered since 2009, representing over 1,000 learner hours of community learning.

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

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

Strategy 4 – Create complete communities that integrate nature and the built environment

In addition, the SNAP Program contributes to many of the other TRCA's corporate strategies.

FINANCIAL DETAILS

There is no fee associated with the FCM Visionary Award application, however there is a requirement for a representative of the winning entry to deliver a presentation at FCM's 2020 Sustainable Communities Conference taking place October 20-22, 2020 in St. John's, Newfoundland where award winners will be honoured. If the project is selected, funds to cover travel expenses may be available in SNAP Program budgets and if not, other budgets will be reviewed to ensure a TRCA representative is available to be present.

There is no cash remuneration for the winning entry, although the winning entry is automatically eligible for FCM's Inspire Award (voted upon by conference delegates) and this award comes with professional coaching and support to prepare a professional "Ted Talk" style presentation on the project.

The SNAP Program's core funding is derived from municipal capital support from the regions of Peel and York, and the City of Toronto. TRCA is also in discussion with Durham Region municipalities in our jurisdiction and will report back to the Board on this. By leveraging these municipal budgets, SNAP has attracted additional public and private funding of over \$3 million dollars over the past 10 years, including grants from FCM, EcoAction, RBC Bluewater, CMHC and others, that have helped advance the innovative practices and approaches of SNAP at the neighbourhood level. Additionally, both municipal and non-municipal funding has helped contribute to the establishment of cost sharing arrangements with other partners, supported the development of community capacity and empowered volunteers to extend neighbourhood-scale efforts toward achieving TRCA's watershed objectives and strategic goals shared with our

Item 7.11

municipal partners, such as community resiliency, ecosystem restoration and healthy communities.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

FCM requires a Board of Directors resolution acknowledging and endorsing the submission of the application for the Green Municipal Fund 20th Anniversary Visionary Award. Following Board acknowledgement and endorsement, staff will submit the necessary documentation and application to FCM by the April 30, 2020 deadline.

Report prepared by: Sonya Meek, extension 5253

Emails: sonya.meek@trca.ca

For Information contact: Sonya Meek, extension 5253

Emails: sonya.meek@trca.ca

Date: April 8, 2020