

Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Meeting #5/20, Friday, September 11, 2020

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

RE: **FUNDING AND GRANTS PROGRAM**
In-Year Program Update

KEY ISSUE

To provide an in-year update to the Funding and Grants program as of August 31, 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the staff report highlighting the in-year Funding and Grants program update for 2020, be received.

BACKGROUND

The Funding and Grants program within the Strategic Business Planning and Performance business unit provides timely and seamless support for all Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (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 the leadership and collaboration among all divisions to ensure consensus in the prioritization and strategic positioning of all new funding opportunities.

RATIONALE

Attachment 1 provides a summary of the status of funding applications submitted in 2020, which are organized based on their current status of approved, under review, and declined grants. The attachment is current as of August 31, 2020.

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 7 – Build partnerships and new business models

Strategy 9 – Measure performance

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Between January 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020, the Funding and Grants program has facilitated a total of 46 grant submissions with a total in-year request of \$9.8M. The additional revenues and support generated through the funding and grants program help to provide projects and programs with an increasingly sustainable business model by reducing reliance on partner municipality funding.

TRCA currently has \$5.7M in grant applications under review with various funding programs following grant applications that were submitted in the current or previous fiscal years. To date in 2020, TRCA received notice that \$2.6M has been awarded through the Funding and Grants program, and that \$20.5M has been declined. This indicates an in-year success rate of 11% as of August 31, 2020 for the Funding and Grants program.

Item 9.1

Table 1: In-Year Grant Program Update

| Grant Status | # of Grants | Approved/Requested Funding \$ (000's) |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Under Review Grants | 14 | \$5,696 |
| Awarded Grants | 16 | \$2,560 |
| Declined Grants | 27 | \$20,455 |

In addition to the funding applications submitted and/or awarded in the current fiscal year, TRCA continues to manage grants and funding that have been successful in previous fiscal years and are still active in 2020. TRCA has budgeted a total of \$25.7M in revenues for 2020, which is representative of all sources of grant funding.

As of August 31, 2020, TRCA had earned 25% of the budgeted grant revenue for 2020, primarily as a result of delayed invoicing for the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF). TRCA staff are working closely with program officers throughout this process and will continue to report on the status of these projects. Additionally, delays related to approvals for The Meadoway trail implementation have caused much of this project to be deferred into 2021.

The following section highlights some of the major projects and programs that make up the budgeted total for each revenue category:

Federal

Toronto Region Ravine Erosion Management and Hazard Mitigation Project and Waterfront Erosion Hazard Mitigation Project– With funding from the Government of Canada's DMAF program, these projects continue to be implemented to address erosion issues within TRCA jurisdiction. The projects address erosion along ravine systems in the Region of Peel, York Region and the City of Toronto, as well as maintaining and restoring TRCA's extensive network of shoreline erosion control structures over the next 10 years.

Monarch Nation – TRCA was awarded a grant from Environment and Climate Change Canada to engage children aged 6-12 in programming focused on species at risk. Over the next 2 years, the program will continue to engage a total of 55,000 children through stewardship and environmental action projects.

TRCA's New Administrative Office Building – With funding from Natural Resources Canada's Green Construction through Wood (GCWood) Program, TRCA is constructing a new mass timber head office building which promises to be one of the most energy-efficient office buildings in North America once completed.

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy – TRCA successfully applied for the first three intake periods of this grant to offset the impacts of COVID-19 on its operations and is assessing further intakes, in accordance with the program's regulations.

Provincial

Drinking Water Source Protection Program – With funding from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, the Drinking Water Source Protection Program supports communities to continue to protect their drinking water sources under Ontario's framework for source protection planning.

Item 9.1

Professional Access Into Employment (PAIE) Program – With funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the PAIE Program continues to help internationally trained environmental engineers, geoscientists, planners, ecologists and green building specialists to obtain commensurate employment in Ontario.

Municipal

Toronto Tree Cover Project – The Toronto Tree Cover Project will engage communities throughout Toronto in support of the development and expansion of native tree cover on commercial, industrial and institutional lands throughout the city.

Non-Government

The Meadoway – With funding from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, detailed design work is currently being completed for The Meadoway trail network, as well as extensive meadow restoration and outreach and education programs to engage and inform members of the surrounding community.

The funding and grants program continues to support the establishment and success of sustainable business models through collaboration with partners and the pursuit of diversified revenue streams which directs additional resources towards key initiatives.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

Various aspects of the Funding and Grants Program were affected by the COVID-19 outbreak beginning in March 2020. A number of grant intakes were extended, and several award notices are still outstanding beyond anticipated notification dates. The Funding and Grants team will continue to work with its partners to keep abreast of developments in existing application streams. Various project reporting periods were also adjusted to account for government closures and restrictions. The Funding and Grants team continues to work with TRCA's funding partners to submit grant reports in a timely fashion.

The Funding and Grants Program is committed to enhancing the relationship between TRCA and its funding partners. To this end, the Funding and Grants Team has developed and implemented a new Standard Operating Procedure for liaising with funding partners before and after grant applications are submitted to ensure program alignment, to assess areas for improvement in the case of unfunded projects, and to determine successful approaches in the case of awarded grants.

TRCA will continue its efforts to grow the funding and grants program to support both mandatory and non-mandatory activities as a means of reducing the financial impacts anticipated as a result of the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. TRCA staff will continue to update the Board of Directors on a bi-annual basis as to the status and success of the Funding and Grants program inclusive of reporting on the success rate and performance indicators for the program.

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Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: 2020 In-Year Grant Program Update