

## Item 8.1

### Items for the Information of the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee

**TO:** Co-Chairs and Members of the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee  
Meeting #2/20, Tuesday, September 22, 2020

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

**RE: PARTNERS IN PROJECT GREEN UPDATE ON 2020 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

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#### KEY ISSUE

Executive Management Committee update on progress against 2020 strategic priorities for Partners in Project Green.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**WHEREAS** Partners in Project Green was launched in 2008 to advance the adoption of sustainability practices within the Pearson Airport economic zone;

**AND WHEREAS** a Strategic Refresh to the Partners in Project Green program was completed in 2019 that affirmed objectives related to the expansion and advancement of eco-business programming and services to additional economic clusters across Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's nine watersheds;

**AND WHEREAS** the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee ("PPG EMC") received the information report in Meeting #1/20 on the Partners in Project Green 2020 Strategic Priorities;

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** the following information report on progress updates against the 2020 priority action areas for Partners in Project Green be received;

**AND FURTHER THAT** staff report back to future PPG EMC meetings on progress related to the 2020 priority action areas as outlined.

#### BACKGROUND

Partners in Project Green: A Pearson Eco-Business Zone was launched in 2008 by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA), with support from the Regional Municipalities of Peel and York, the City of Toronto and from the nearby business community to transform the employment lands surrounding Toronto Pearson, and located within TRCA's Etobicoke-Mimico Creeks Watershed into an internationally recognized community of eco-friendly businesses.

The creation of Partners in Project Green (PPG) stemmed from an eco-business model recommendation identified in a 2006 joint TRCA and GTAA report that provided restoration strategies for the natural and aquatic systems surrounding Toronto Pearson.

PPG's mandate has expanded since 2006 to include the provision of numerous services to the partnership members. PPG's 2019-2023 Strategic Refresh identifies the four primary performance areas of the partnership:

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- 1) Communications & Engagement;
- 2) Waste Management;
- 3) Energy Performance & Low Carbon Transportation, and
- 4) Water Stewardship.

Within each of these performance areas, PPG provides the following services to members:

- Providing expert advice and sustainability opportunity identification
- Facilitating collective action initiatives
- Performance tracking
- Sharing best practices and facilitating peer-to-peer learning through consortia
- Providing networking opportunities
- Accelerating innovation through network introductions, events and partnerships
- Providing members with speaking opportunities, profile & recognition through case studies, trade publication articles, the PPG website and social media posts

The size, scale and geographic scope of the partnership has also grown to include additional municipalities (such as the City of Vaughan and Town of Caledon), non-profit organizations and businesses. Currently, the PPG network includes 82 members, including seven municipalities, nine non-profit organizations and 66 businesses.

As part of the 2020 priority-setting exercise, TRCA staff identified specific areas of activity for 2020 that are intended to increase the reach and potential of PPG while building additional capacity for long-term growth of the program:

- Re-energize the PPG network through improved programming, outreach, and membership, with a particular emphasis on engagement of Boards of Trade/Chambers of Commerce and municipal economic development offices;
- Redevelop the PPG membership structure, including categories, services, and financial model;
- Develop a screening process for identifying high-priority/high-potential geographically based economic zones for business engagement;
- Complete a sector-services based Integrated Service Delivery Model to better integrate specific TRCA programs that provide sector-based programs, including PPG, SNAP (Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Program), STEP (Sustainable Technology Evaluation Program), PAIE (Professional Access into Employment) and Community Transformation/Corporate Sustainability.
- Develop a Long-Term Financial Plan for sector-based programs and services that leverage both programming and financial opportunities to enhance services and financial models for the delivery of TRCA activities.
- Leverage opportunities to provide corporate and employee engagement activities through the Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation's *Look After Where You Live* program.

The above activities are intended to increase the reach and potential of the PPG network while also leveraging other TRCA activities that can support the advancement of objectives of both PPG and TRCA related to sustainability within target economic zones. These priorities were communicated to the PPG Executive Committee during Meeting #1/20 (June 12, 2020).

Since that time, additional emphasis has been placed on integrating PPG's activities, programming and services within the recently realigned Education & Training division of TRCA.

### RATIONALE

The following progress updates are provided for the information of the Executive Management Committee and organized by strategic priority:

- *Re-energize the PPG network through improved programming, outreach and membership, with a particular emphasis on engagement of Boards of Trade/Chambers of Commerce and municipal economic development offices.*
  - The PPG team at TRCA has begun a series of dedicated team meetings assessing market changes, project impacts and stakeholder needs to assess program effectiveness and required updates to programming.
  - The PPG team has also confirmed interest from seven Economic Development Offices (City of Brampton, City of Mississauga, City of Toronto, City of Vaughan, Town of Caledon, City of Richmond Hill and Region of Durham) to participate in an Economic Development Office Roundtable in late 2020 focused on the expansion of sustainable business practices throughout the GTA, and how the PPG team and network can benefit economic development efforts in these six jurisdictions. The PPG team will continue to reach out to other municipalities within TRCA's jurisdiction to invite their participation.
  - The PPG team has made contact with multiple Boards of Trade and published outreach materials to drive further awareness and impact, including most recently the Mississauga Board of Trade and Richmond Hill Board of Trade.
- *Redevelop the PPG membership structure, including categories, services and financial model.*
  - The PPG team has begun a series of dedicated team meetings to evaluate the current membership structure, assess feedback from members, and explore the financial impacts of alternative approaches to membership and engagement with the business community.
  - A draft membership structure report with recommendations for future updates is expected to be completed in Q4 2020. Initial findings from surveys of members indicate that members' main perceived benefits include access to events, networking opportunities, collaborating with industry peers and professional development.
- *Development of a screening process for identifying high-priority/high-potential geographically based economic zones for business engagement.*
  - The PPG team at TRCA has met with colleagues across the Education and Training, Development and Engineering Services and Policy Planning Divisions and with TRCA staff experienced in the development of Geographic Information-System (GIS) based screening tools and begun the effort of establishing the layers and data required to effectively screen economic zones in the GTA to maximize outreach and impact. The tool will use spatial data on economic indicators, energy use, health indicators and any other relevant data to identify priority geographic areas expected to yield outsized sustainability benefits and inform PPG's engagement strategy going forward.
  - The draft screening tool is expected to be completed in Q1 2021.
- *Complete a sector-services based Integrated Service Delivery Model to better integrate specific TRCA programs that provide sector-based programs, including PPG, SNAP (Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Program), STEP (Sustainable Technology*

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*Evaluation Program), PAIE (Professional Access into Employment) and Community Transformation/Corporate Sustainability.*

- The PPG team has contributed to the draft Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM), currently being developed collaboratively by multiple teams within the Education and Training Division.
  - The PPG team and SNAP team have developed two collaboration projects consistent with the integrated service delivery model: a business community outreach project around the Bramalea SNAP neighborhood in Brampton, and a business community outreach project around the Thornhill SNAP neighborhood in Vaughan.
  - The draft ISDM is expected to be completed in Q4 2020.
- *Develop a Long-Term Financial Plan for sector-based programs and services that leverage both programming and financial opportunities to enhance services and financial models for the delivery of TRCA activities.*
  - The PPG team has contributed to the draft Long-Term Financial Plan as part of both the sector services sub-group and the education services subgroup. The inputs to the Long-Term Financial Plan so far have included historical revenue and cost models, trending data, and current service levels across the seven groups within the Education & Training division.
  - The draft Long-Term Financial Plan is expected to be completed in Q1 2021, and will include sections on core principles, proposed financial models, key drivers for revenue growth, and an assessment of the required infrastructure, including human resources, technology and other aspects.
- *Leverage opportunities to provide corporate and employee engagement and giving activities through the Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation's programs.*
  - The PPG team has cross-promoted the Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation's (TRCF) programming through multiple communications and webinars and has met with TRCF staff to explore additional opportunities for collaboration moving forward in 2020/2021.
  - PPG staff will support promotion and participation in TRCF's "Look After Where You Live" program within the PPG network as a vehicle for enhanced member employee engagement going forward.
  - TRCA sees the value of strengthening the connection between the business community and TRCF to advance conservation projects and initiatives within local watersheds and will showcase TRCF fundraising campaigns to PPG membership as appropriate.

### **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 1 – Green the Toronto region's economy**

**Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship**

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

**Strategy 8 – Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge**

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

At upcoming PPG Executive Management Committee meetings, staff will provide detailed reports and updates related to the above priorities, including action tracking related to overall progress of specific goals.

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Report prepared by: Jeff Robertson, (416) 894-8454

Emails: [jeff.roberston@trca.ca](mailto:jeff.roberston@trca.ca)

For Information contact: Jeff Robertson, (416) 894-8454

Emails: [jeff.roberston@trca.ca](mailto:jeff.roberston@trca.ca)

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