

Item for the Action of the Regional Watershed Alliance

TO: Chair and Members of the Regional Watershed Alliance
Meeting #3/20, Wednesday, September 16, 2020

FROM: Sameer Dhalla, Director, Development and Engineering Services

RE: **ETOBICOKE CREEK WATERSHED PLAN AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

KEY ISSUE

To provide information to and seek guidance from the Regional Watershed Alliance on the Engagement Strategy in support of updating the Etobicoke Creek Watershed Plan (ECWP) as part of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) next generation of watershed planning.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS TRCA is undertaking an update to the ECWP to provide updated scientific information in support of integrated municipal planning;

AND WHEREAS TRCA has developed a draft Engagement Strategy to guide partner and stakeholder engagement throughout this process;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Regional Watershed Alliance provide recommendations to update the Engagement Strategy, as needed, to ensure effective community engagement as the watershed plan is developed;

AND THAT the Regional Watershed Alliance advise how it wishes to be kept informed about progress made on the ECWP.

BACKGROUND

The previous watershed plan for Etobicoke Creek was completed in 2002, with a Technical Update completed in 2010. This watershed plan combined the Etobicoke and Mimico Creeks into one watershed plan. Since then, watershed science and provincial policies have evolved to necessitate a renewed approach to watershed planning at TRCA.

The provincial planning framework emphasizes the importance of watershed planning for integrated and long-term planning by municipalities. Policy direction in the *Provincial Policy Statement*, encourages a coordinated approach to planning to protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by using the watershed as the ecologically meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning. The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* and the *Greenbelt Plan* require municipalities, partnering with conservation authorities as appropriate, to undertake watershed planning to inform the identification of water resource systems, the protection, enhancement or restoration of the quality and quantity of water, decisions on allocation of growth and planning for water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. Due to these provincial policy priorities, watershed planning is intended to inform various aspects of municipal land use and infrastructure planning.

RATIONALE

This report is intended to explain the process Watershed Planning & Reporting (WPR) intends to follow for the development of the ECWP, as part of TRCA's next generation of watershed

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planning. It will also explain the Engagement Strategy developed as part of this planning process.

To develop the ECWP, TRCA will be adhering to a staged process as outlined in Figure 1.

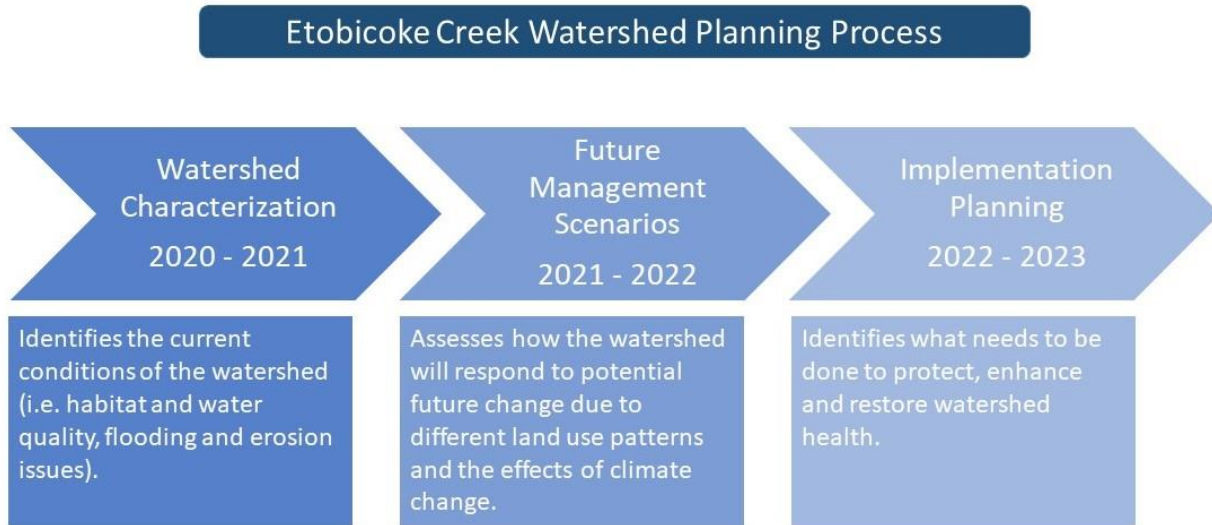


Figure 1 - Watershed Planning Process

To carry out this work, TRCA has established an internal Technical Committee with expert staff from across the organization to compile data and provide analysis on the following technical components in support of watershed characterization and the evaluation of potential management scenarios:

- Water Resource System – delineates the features and areas of the system as per provincial policies (e.g. permanent and intermittent streams, seepage areas and springs, ecologically significant groundwater recharge areas), and assess the hydrology and hydrogeology of the watershed
- Natural Heritage System (NHS) – delineates the features and areas of the system as per provincial policies and compare existing municipal NHS's to TRCA's recommended NHS
- Ecosystem Quality/Quantity – assesses terrestrial and aquatic habitat quality and quantity
- Water Quality – identifies parameters of concern (i.e. chlorides, metals, *E. coli*, etc.)
- Natural Hazards – assesses flooding and erosion issues
- Stormwater Management – assesses the existing state of stormwater management infrastructure
- Restoration Planning – assesses existing identified restoration opportunities and restoration projects that have been completed

TRCA has also established a Steering Committee, made up of key watershed partners to support and guide the development of this watershed plan. The Steering Committee for the ECWP consists of:

- City of Toronto
- Region of Peel
- City of Mississauga

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- City of Brampton
- Town of Caledon
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Greater Toronto Airport Authority

The Steering Committee will play a key role in reviewing the technical reports and will collaboratively develop a management framework to determine actions to protect, enhance and restore the watershed.

Throughout the watershed planning process, TRCA with its Steering Committee partners, will be engaging Indigenous groups, stakeholders and the public to identify issues of concern, receive feedback and develop support for the recommended actions of the watershed plan. Engagement will be guided by the draft Engagement Strategy (attached).

The Engagement Strategy will be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure a comprehensive stakeholder list. Records of all engagement activities and correspondence will be maintained by TRCA.

Additional details will be provided in the presentation accompanying this report.

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 2 – Manage our regional water resources for current and future generations

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

Strategy 12 – Facilitate a region-wide approach to sustainability

FINANCIAL DETAILS

Funds to support the development of this watershed plan are from 120-40.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

Staff from WPR will work with internal TRCA technical staff and Steering Committee partners to follow the staged watershed planning process and associated Engagement Strategy with the intent of having a finalized ECWP by 2023.

TRCA staff will incorporate feedback and suggestions from RWA members on the Engagement Strategy for the ECWP.

If desired by RWA members, TRCA staff would be pleased to share regular updates on the status of the watershed plan at the appropriate stages in the process (e.g. watershed characterization report, scenario analysis report, draft watershed plan).

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Date: August 12, 2020

Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: Engagement Strategy: Etobicoke Creek