Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors
                Meeting #8/20, Friday, November 20, 2020

FROM: Natalie Blake, Chief Human Resources Officer

RE: **SUCCESSION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (SDP)**

KEY ISSUE
Update on the development of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) Succession Development Program (SDP).

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT this report on the development of TRCA's Succession Development Program be received.

BACKGROUND
As part of the Five-Year Update to the Building The Living City 2013-2022 Strategic Plan, Strategy 11, *Invest in our Staff*, TRCA identified the creation of a succession plan as a project accomplishment for 2022.

At the Board of Directors Meeting #9/19, held on October 25, 2019, TRCA staff delivered a presentation on *TRCA Strategies to Achieve Strategic Plan Priorities.* The presentation provided an update on the Strategic Plan Priority 11, *Invest in Our Staff* and notably identified several strategic initiatives underway and forthcoming that supported TRCA's modernization efforts and achievement of TRCA's strategic priorities. One key initiative identified as a priority for talent management was succession planning.

As TRCA staff built momentum in the modernization of its human resources practices, developing critical talent management policies, programs and practices, the Senior Leadership Team in conjunction with human resources, turned its efforts to the creation of a value-driven Succession Development Program (SDP).

Across organizations succession planning has been rated as the least effective or second least effective area of human resources for five years in a row (McLean & Company HR Trends Report, 2014-2018). Organizations often focus on levels of top management without evaluating which critical roles add the most value to the organization, they build programs that are stand alone and not interlinked with other human resources talent management programs, and are often perceived to lack fairness in the identification of participants which can cause significant disengagement amongst employees.

With succession planning being a TRCA Strategic Plan priority, TRCA Human Resources took an integrated, evidence based, and inclusive approach to the development of our value-driven succession development program that is based on best practice research.

Key successes that will be driven out of the implementation of integrated succession development program, include:
- Increased organizational capability and capacity – through the availability of a high performing and qualified talent pipeline prepared to support critical roles.
- Proactively addressing talent scarcity within the labour market.

- Increased retention of institutional knowledge – providing the ability to retain, develop and grow internal TRCA intellectual capital (the succession process provides a mechanism for the transfer of vital intellectual capital).
- Increased business continuity – limited disruption when unexpected turnover occurs within critical TRCA roles; supports contingency planning.
- Improved employee engagement –succession program provides a visible investment in TRCA staff which positively impacts engagement.
- Increased employee retention through expanded career development opportunities.
- Reduced talent acquisition costs because of increased retention of top talent.

RATIONALE

The foundation of TRCA's SDP is based on a process that focuses on the identification, assessment, development, and placement of the right talent in critical roles to ensure business continuity and continued high performance of TRCA. The program has an established continuous review cycle designed to monitor, evaluate, and calibrate the program to ensure the program is meeting TRCA's organizational needs.

Figure 1 - Succession Development Program and Process
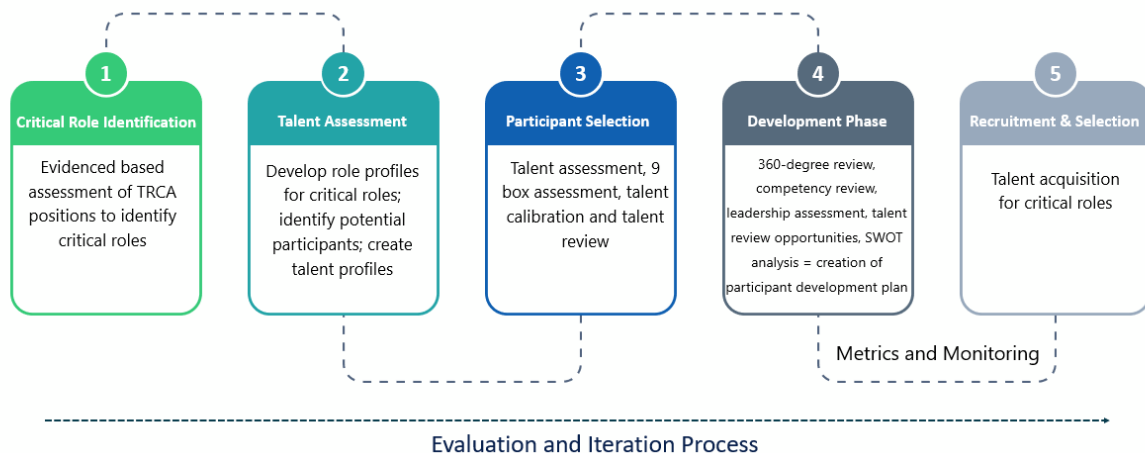
Program and Process Overview

1 *Critical Role Identification:*
- Clearly define critical roles established to ground decisions and evaluation.
- Determine evaluation methods for the assessment of critical roles.
- Senior Leadership Team assessment of critical roles using a standardized rating tool.
- Senior Leadership Team calibration exercise of identified critical roles.
- Finalize TRCA critical roles for first phase of succession planning.
- Develop role profiles for each of the critical positions. Role profiles to contain information on the skills, competencies, and other minimum requirements for the critical role.

2 *Talent Assessment:*
- Establish the process and criteria used for SPD employee identification.
- Establish process and methodology for employee talent assessment:
    - **Performance evaluations** – review of performance reviews.
    - **Talent Assessment** – assessment of role profile against individual employee talent profiles.
    - **9 box assessment** – a recognized gold standard assessment in the field of

Human Resources that provides an objective assessment of talent and assesses employees based on their performance and potential.

- o **Talent calibration** – involves a comprehensive review and comparison of individual assessment results against peers
- o **Talent review** – participants are identified; developmental and growth opportunities are assessed
- Create individual talent profiles for each potential participant to support the assessment process.

3 *Participation Selection*:

- Complete talent assessment per the talent assessment methodology (as outlined above).
- Define participant readiness.
- Conduct talent calibration and talent review meetings with the Senior Leadership Team
- Identify program participants.

4 *Development Phase:*

- The first stage of participant development is focused participant insight gathering:
    - o 360-degree assessment.
    - o Leadership assessment.
    - o Competency review.
    - o Use of role and talent profiles and any talent assessment results to identify gaps for development.
- Utilize the insight information, the participant will complete a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- With the SWOT information in hand, the participant, supported by their Divisional Director or Senior Manager, and Human Resources, will establish a development plan with clear objectives, required training, assigned projects, timelines and measures of success.
- Participants will complete required leadership training and any identified functional training.
- Participants will complete job shadow of critical role.
- Regular check-in with Divisional Director and/or Senior Manager and Human Resources for ongoing evaluation.
- Divisional Director and or Senior Manager will provide ongoing mentoring during the development phase.

5 *Talent Acquisition:*

- Determine how critical roles will be filled where a vacancy presents itself:
    - o To ensure a fair and transparent process and alignment with TRCA policies, critical role vacancies will be filled permanently via a formal recruitment process.

Progress to Date

Prior to the commencement of the development of TRCA's SDP, TRCA's Senior Leadership Team and Human Resources were first required to build our core talent management policies, programs and practices that would be required to enable the succession program. To accomplish this, TRCA staff implemented a number of talent management programs, including a renewed integrated and interactive Performance Development Program (PDP), introduction of career and development planning connected to the performance development program, development of a robust competency framework both tied to TRCA's core values and critical leadership and senior leadership competency requirements, and introduction of a Learning and Development Program (LDP) that provides all TRCA management with a strong foundation in critical people management concepts and principles.

TRCA's Senior Leadership Team created a robust Project Charter, establishing a clear roadmap for the development of our SDP. Through the development of the Project Charter, a clear definition of succession, scope and project direction was established. Also, defined roles were ascertained for transparency and accountability through the evolution of the program. Furthermore, a steering committee was established to support the program and ongoing assessments and evaluations. Risks and mitigation strategies were assessed, and program goals and metrics were created to establish a clear definition of success.

With the roadmap in place, TRCA staff undertook an inventory of our enabling Human Resources program and processes to inform program design and ensure alignment with critical talent management programs. With this information in hand, the program has been built to directly link to TRCA's other talent management programs and processes, including TRCA's PDP, Competency Framework (leadership, manager, and individual contributor), LDP and talent acquisition processes.

TRCA's Senior Leadership Team undertook an evidenced based approach to define and identify critical roles within the organization. To commence the process, the Senior Leadership Team affirmed the definition of what a "*critical role" is,* which is defined as a TRCA position that is crucial to achieving organizational objectives, drives business performance, and includes specialized and rare competencies. Critical roles, by definition, also needed to be high in strategic value, which refers to the importance of the role in keeping TRCA functioning and executing on our strategic plan and objectives. The position also needed to be high in rarity, meaning challenging to find and develop the competencies in the position.

Based on the factors outlined above, the Senior Leadership Team endeavoured to identify and evaluate roles within their respective divisions through a comprehensive matrix, with evaluation based on six (6) criteria that tied back to the definition of a critical role. Following the evaluation, the matrix plotted each position as:

- **Critical:** A critical role is crucial to achieving TRCA objectives, drives business performance, and includes specialized and rare skills. Critical roles are high in strategic value and rarity.
- **Core:** A core role is related to operational excellence. It can be highly strategically valuable but easy to find or develop the skills or can be difficult to find or develop the skills but not crucial to TRCA's business strategy.
- **Supporting:** A supporting role is important in keeping the business functioning, however the strategic value is low, and it is easy to find or develop the competencies.

Following the assessment exercise, TRCA's Senior Leadership Team held calibration discussions to ensure the standardized rating-based process considered feedback and evidence to support outcomes. Following a few iterations of the evaluation process, the Senior Leadership Team was able to identify sixteen (16) critical roles within the organization.

Subsequent to the identification of TRCA's critical roles, TRCA staff commenced the development of role profiles for each critical position. The role profiles outline the skills competencies and other minimum requirements required for the position. The role profile will be used further in the SDP process to support talent assessment, participant identification and the development of participant development plans in the development phase of the program.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan
This report supports the following set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:
Strategy 11 – Invest in our staff

FINANCIAL DETAILS
Work is underway to ensure that funds for training and learning and development within each division are coordinated and equitably distributed in a manner that supports the PDP, LDP, and SDP within existing operating budgets.

NEXT STEPS
Following the completion of TRCA's 2020 PDP cycle in January 2021, the Senior Leadership Team will work with the Senior Management Team to identify talent via the SDP program pre-established criteria outlined in the programs Phase 2 – Talent Assessment. Upon completion of Phase 2, the Senior Leadership Team supported by Human Resources will work through Phase 3 – Participant Selection. Participants will then commence the Development Phase, with SDP growth and development occurring throughout the remainder of 2021.

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Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: Succession Development Program - Critical Roles