

Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors
Friday, March 26, 2021 Meeting

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Darryl Gray, Director, Education & Training

RE: **PRACTICING WELL-BEING IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**
Strategic Business Planning Policy

KEY ISSUE

To provide information to the Board of Directors regarding a planned initiative to participate in a research project which explores the impact that green buildings have on the well-being of building occupants using Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) current and future head office.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS TRCA staff have reviewed the resources required and potential benefits to participating in the Practicing Well-being in the Built Environment research project in partnership with University of Toronto, Sustainable Buildings Canada, and the WELL Being Institute;

THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the report outlining the details and benefits for participating in the Practicing Well-Being in the Built Environment research project be received.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with TRCA's Strategic Business Planning (SBP) Policy, all potential new projects/programs or proposed modifications to existing initiatives must proceed through the SBP Policy workflow, including reporting to the Board of Directors for informational purposes.

Practicing Well-being in the Built Environment is a research project led by the University of Toronto in partnership with Sustainable Buildings Canada and the international WELL Building Institute, which will study the impact that green buildings have on the well-being of building occupants. This research intends to influence future changes to the WELL system and provide TRCA with data required to obtain WELL certification which is a priority as part of the migration to the new administrative office building planned for 2022.

RATIONALE

TRCA's participation in this research project may provide a positive profile of the new administrative office building at both a national and international scale. It also offers TRCA the opportunity to participate in the refinement of WELL certification system. The results of this research project will provide some of the required data as part of TRCA's WELL certification valued at approximately \$3k - \$5k. Information gathered as part of this research project, such as the post-occupancy staff survey and/or environmental quality data, will also serve to enhance TRCA's own internal performance reporting program.

Item 8.7

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 8 – Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge

Strategy 11 – Invest in our staff

FINANCIAL DETAILS

TRCA’s participation in the research project will require administrative coordination for: development of a Memorandum of Understanding with the research team; staff engagement during the research process; and oversight to ensure the project meets TRCA’s privacy and confidentiality policies. The scope and sampling for the research project will include a pre- and post- occupancy survey with 350 staff, and a more in-depth engagement approach with 12 staff using both a pre- and post-occupancy interval.

The total estimated cost for this project is \$16,400, phased over 2-years (2021-2022). Funding to support this initiative will come from the Corporate Sustainability and Community Transformation program.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

In accordance with the SBP Policy, staff will continue to progress through the policy workflow. Once approved, the next steps within the process include refining the budget and ensuring deliverables are reflected in both 2021 and 2022.

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Date: March 26, 2021