

Section III – Items for the Information of the Board

TO: Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
Friday September 10, 2021 Meeting

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 Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) Board of Directors on the Funding and Grants program and to highlight the success rate as of August 13, 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the staff report highlighting the in-year Funding and Grants program update for 2021, be received.

BACKGROUND

The Funding and Grants program within the Strategic Business Planning and Performance business unit provides timely and seamless support for all 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 as of August 13, 2021, which are organized based on their current status of approved, under review, and declined grants. The attachment is current as of August 13, 2021.

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 2021 and August 13, 2021, the Funding and Grants program has facilitated a total of 48 grant submissions with a total in-year request of \$12.1M. 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 approximately \$7.4M in grant applications under review with various funding programs following grant applications that were submitted in the current fiscal year. Throughout 2021 to date, TRCA received notice that \$3.7M has been awarded through the Funding and Grants program, and that \$8.3M has been declined.

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Table 1: In-Year Grant Program Update

Grant Status	# of Grants	Approved/Requested Funding \$ (000's)
Under Review Grants	19	\$7,376
Awarded Grants	30	\$3,741
Declined Grants	13	\$8,306

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 were still active in 2021. TRCA has budgeted a total of \$21.0M in revenues for 2021, which is representative of all sources of grant funding.

As of August 13, 2021, TRCA had earned 21% of the budgeted grant revenue for 2021. The percentage of revenue earned appears low as a result of the timing of 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, COVID-19 restrictions have delayed implementation of the Administrative Head Office Building project and thus payments from Natural Resources Canada for TRCA's GCWood grant have been deferred.

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's 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 7 years.

The Newcomer Youth Green Economy Project (NYGEP) – With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, NYGEP supports newcomer youth interested in careers in the environmental sector by providing access to experiential learning opportunities and job skills training. Despite challenges posed by restrictions to in-person learning, staff have mobilized virtual alternatives to ensure NYGEP's continuous and successful implementation.

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.

Provincial

Professional Access Into Employment (PAIE) Program – With a funding extension from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the PAIE Program will continue to help internationally trained environmental engineers, geoscientists, planners, ecologists and green building specialists to obtain commensurate employment in Ontario into Fall 2021. A proposal has been submitted to the Ministry to further extend PAIE implementation until 2024.

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Municipal

Toronto Tree Cover Project – The Toronto Tree Cover Project has engaged communities throughout Toronto in support of the development and expansion of native tree cover on commercial, industrial and institutional lands throughout the city for over three years.

Non-Government

The Meadoway – With funding from the Weston Family Foundation, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and City of Toronto, 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 continue to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Funding and Grants team will continue to work closely with TRCA's funding partners to ensure that grant application submissions and reporting are submitted in a timely manner, despite delays and implementation changes caused by public health restrictions. The Funding and Grants team will also continue to work with TRCA's partners to adjust to our shared circumstances.

The *Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund* (DMAF) has re-opened and will be accepting applications to its small-scale stream (projects with budgets between \$1M and \$20M) and large-scale stream (projects with budgets greater than \$20M). The Funding and Grants team is exploring this new intake by collaborating with TRCA staff and municipal partners to identify eligible projects, secure matching dollars and develop strong funding proposals. DMAF already provides significant support for TRCA's core natural hazard programs, and the Funding and Grants team anticipates a concerted effort to extend this support through collaborative applications – including both partner-led and TRCA-led initiatives.

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Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: 2021 In-Year Grant Program Update