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

TO: Chair and Members of the Partners in Project Green Executive Management Committee
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 Meeting

FROM: Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training

RE: UPDATE ON RE-ENERGIZING THE PPG MEMBER BASE THROUGH BOARDS OF TRADE, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICES

KEY ISSUE

Update on Partners in Project Green's (PPG) efforts to strengthen relationships and collaboration with Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Offices ("BOT, COC and EDO") to enhance PPG's reach and more effectively promote sustainable business operation across the Greater Toronto Area.

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 TRCA's nine watersheds;

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

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following information report on progress updates related to engagement with Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Offices by Partners in Project Green be received.

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.

At Board of Directors Meeting #4/19, held on April 26, 2019, Resolution #A51/19 was approved in part as follows:

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THAT the Partners in Project Green Strategic Refresh 2019-2023 and Executive Management Committee Terms of Reference 2019-2023 ... be approved

This strategic refresh was intended to guide the next generation of eco-business activities through PPG focused on increased engagement, improved performance outcomes and enhanced alignment with municipal and business priorities.

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. One such activity area is outlined below:

- Re-energize the PPG network through improved programming, outreach and membership, with a particular emphasis on engagement of Boards of Trade (BoT)/ Chambers of Commerce (CoC) and municipal economic development offices.

RATIONALE

The following progress updates are provided for the information of the Executive Management Committee in relation to PPG's identified priority of engagement with BOT, COC and Economic Development Offices (EDO):

- PPG hosted a virtual "Economic Development Office Roundtable" event on Friday, November 20, 2020. The purpose of the roundtable was to identify synergies in economic development programs and priorities across the GTA in support of a stronger and more sustainable COVID-19 economic recovery. PPG also made use of the event to raise the EDO contacts' awareness of available PPG programs to support businesses in their regions. Nine economic development offices confirmed interest in the event, and seven attended. The full list of attendees is below.

Name	Region	Title
Daryl Van Moorsel	City of Brampton	Sector Manager, Advanced Manufacturing
John Barber	City of Mississauga	Research Analyst
Walter Garrison	City of Mississauga	Officer, Advanced Manufacturing Business Integrator
Matthew Premru	City of Toronto	Officer - West Office (Etobicoke Civic Centre)
Raphael Costa	City of Vaughan	Acting Director, Economic and Cultural Development at City of Vaughan
Sandra Dolson	Town of Caledon	Economic Development Officer
Sonia Salomone	Durham Region	Manager Business Development & Investment, Planning & Economic Development

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Rob McMonagle	City of Toronto	Green Sector, Sector Development Office
Chris Banfield	Region of York	Strategic Economic Initiatives

- Twenty action items for collaboration amongst the EDOs and PPG were identified during the Roundtable, fourteen of which have been completed, and four of which are in progress. Please see the attached status report update from July 19, 2021.
- A 2021 EDO Roundtable is being planned for Q3 to further build on the success of the 2020 meeting.
- PPG staff is undertaking research in partnership with City of Toronto Economic Development and Culture Department into the feasibility of a Green Industries Directory; building a web platform to track and connect green industry businesses across the Greater Toronto Area with relevant audiences. This research is expected to be completed in Q4 2021.
- PPG staff is working with Town of Caledon Economic Development to share PPG programs and services via the EDO website (<https://www.caledonbusiness.ca/en/business-support/green-your-business.aspx>). This website lists various programs and services to help businesses become more sustainable. PPG programs are listed under Energy, Water and Waste, and the People Power Challenge is highlighted directly on the page. The PPG website is also directly linked to from the page.
- PPG staff is working with Town of Caledon Economic Development to develop the GreenBiz Caledon consortium focused on securing PPG membership and providing focused sustainability resources, tools and education to Caledon businesses.
- PPG facilitated a joint PPG / Mississauga Board of Trade podcast interview, published by the Mississauga Board of Trade and featuring Darryl Gray, Director, Education and Training, TRCA. Topics discussed included employee engagement and return to office plans.

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 7 – Build partnerships and new business models

Strategy 8 – Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge

Strategy 12 – Facilitate a region-wide approach to sustainability

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

PPG staff will continue to strengthen relationships with BOT, COC and EDO across TRCA’s watershed and investigate opportunities for collaboration. In particular, PPG staff will incorporate all identified BOT, COC and EDO into the Membership relaunch communications plan scheduled to commence Q1 2022.

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Attachments: 1

Attachment 1: EDO Action Items Status Update