



**DRAFT 2017-2021 Terms of Reference: TRCA Regional Watershed Alliance**

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

Since the 1980s, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) watershed and waterfront committees and task forces have been instrumental in supporting the development and implementing TRCA's watershed management activities. The Rouge Comprehensive Basin Management Strategy (1988), was TRCA's first initiative supported by a citizen based "public committee." The 1989, Greenspace Strategy, committed to a program of watershed strategy development for each of TRCA's watersheds in cooperation with a public advisory committee for each. Over the past two decades, the Duffins-Carruthers Watershed Resource Group, Rouge Park Alliance, Don Watershed Regeneration Council, Humber Watershed Alliance and Etobicoke-Mimico Watersheds Coalition have played a significant role in building community stewardship capacity to help TRCA deliver on priorities of watersheds and waterfront. Watershed and waterfront residents and stakeholders are also engaged through Conservation Lands Stewardship Committees and integrated/multi-objective or sector-based programs such as Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans (SNAP) and Partners in Project Green: A Pearson Eco-Business Zone (PPG).

TRCA's 2013-2022 Strategic Plan highlighted regional sustainability challenges of increasing scope and scale - such as preparing for the impacts of climate change, transitioning to a low carbon economy, managing urbanization and growth pressures. The Plan also called for regional engagement of a broad cross-section of the population at both local and regional scales within TRCA's jurisdiction. As such, In 2015, upon the completion of the existing terms for the Don, Humber and Etobicoke-Mimico Watershed Committees, the Authority directed staff to update TRCA's community focused engagement model in light of new trends and opportunities in civic engagement and to facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017, at Authority Meeting #8/17, The Community Engagement Strategy along with a new citizen governance model was adopted. The new citizen governance model includes the Regional Watershed Alliance (RWA), and its subcommittees; Youth Council, Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups. An Indigenous Liaison Committee to the TRCA Board has also been approved as part of the proposed governance model (Please refer to Attachment 1). The RWA is a formal community-based committee of the TRCA which will report to the Authority on regular basis.

### Authority Direction

(To be inserted after October Authority Meeting)

## 2.0 MISSION AND MANDATE

**Mission:** Create healthy watersheds and waterfront through regional sustainability, local action, and shared priorities and resources. Advance the Living City vision of sustainable communities, regional biodiversity and healthy rivers and shorelines through advocacy, knowledge sharing and collective action.

**Mandate:** Reporting to the TRCA Board (Attachment 1) and working closely with The Living City Foundation, the Regional Watershed Alliance will be established as a subcommittee to TRCA

with the purpose of:

<i>Advocacy</i>	Advocacy for awareness, policy innovation and action within members' sectors, communities and jurisdictions on regional and local environmental and sustainability issues.
<i>Advisory</i>	Input on TRCA initiatives, act as a sounding board to TRCA staff, and advise TRCA Board on matters of community interest.
<i>Collective Action</i>	Priority setting and collective investment in key sustainability and environmental issues for cross-jurisdictional and cross-sectoral actions. Support and leadership to the development of platform and campaigns to bring actors and stakeholders together to drive solutions through collective action and resource sharing.
<i>Reporting</i>	Reporting on collective outcomes on regional sustainability to the public, TRCA municipal partners and stakeholders. Reporting to the TRCA Board on its work.

### **3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Regional Watershed Alliance shall:

- Adhere to the basic principles of sound ecosystem management and sustainability that recognizes the interrelationships between cultural heritage, physical characteristics, biological conditions and economic needs, and the integration of conservation, restoration, social and economic activities necessary for the health of the watersheds;
- Forge partnerships and collaborations that build our collective capacity to advance the goals of TRCA's Strategic Plan Building The Living City 2013-2022 and provide a platform for collective action on cross-jurisdictional and cross-sectoral priorities;
- Work with staff in setting regional and local priorities that help advance TRCA's and its municipal partners objectives of sustainable communities, recommendations of TRCA's 2017 Community Engagement Strategy, watershed plans, watershed report cards and The Living City Report Card;
- Advocate on regional and local environmental policy issues through discussion papers, briefs and comments etc. and providing advice and comments to staff and TRCA Board on relevant programs and policies impacting TRCA watersheds and communities. Examples include: TRCA's Terrestrial Natural Heritage Strategy; Sustainable Near-Urban Agriculture Policy; watershed plans; and Trails/Greenspace Strategy;
- Implement the recommendations of the Toronto and Region Remedial Action Plan as they pertain to the TRCA waterfront and watersheds;

- Work collaboratively with TRCA staff and partners to develop state of the watershed reports and The Living City Report Card which will address jurisdiction-wide sustainability issues;
- Through Watershed forums, events and on-line engagement provide a forum for watershed communication by maintaining and enhancing contacts within the community. Mobilize and empower networks of local communities build capacity and influence people's behavior;
- Act as a resource to TRCA, TRCA's municipal partners and The Living City Foundation by providing advice on matters of community interest;
- Work with TRCA, The Living City Foundation to identify priorities, seek new partnerships, public sector investment and other sources of funding;
- Where appropriate, serving as a resource and contact for media and government relation inquiries;
- Establish subcommittees/ working groups or standing committees as needed, the Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups and Youth Council and collaborate with the Indigenous Liaison Committee as needed;
- Seek political support at all levels of government;
- Collaborate with other conservation authorities, municipalities, ENGO's and groups on opportunities that transcend TRCA jurisdictional boundaries.
- Maximize the collective impact of TRCA and other environmental and sustainability champions in the region through resource and data sharing, measuring, and reporting on regional priorities; and
- Report to TRCA Board on a regular basis.

#### **4.0 Structure**

Supported by TRCA staff, the Regional Watershed Alliance will have a Chair, Co-Chair or Vice Chair, and will be comprised of approximately 45 voting members.

##### **4.1.1 Voting Members**

The Regional Watershed Alliance members will be recruited based on a diverse skill set, sector and community specific expertise, network connections, demonstrated leadership, experience, and knowledge of the watersheds within TRCA's jurisdiction.

- **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Board** (up to six voting representatives)
  - Preferably one representative from each of TRCA's participating member municipalities from TRCA Board.

- **Watershed Residents** (up to 20 voting representatives)
  - Up to 20 watershed residents selected from across TRCA's nine watersheds and waterfront, having equal geographical and demographic representation.
- **Sector Experts and Organizations** (up to 10 voting representatives)
  - Up to 10 members from non-government, think-tanks, business and special interest group representing diverse sectors including youth and Indigenous groups.
- **Municipal Representatives** (up to 7 voting representatives)
  - Representatives of municipalities within TRCA's jurisdiction. This representative could be a political representative representing the municipality, Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) representative/liaison, or senior staff.
- **Provincial Representative** (up to one voting representative)
  - Up to one political representative or senior staff from the Province of Ontario.
- **Federal Representative**
  - Up to one local political representative or senior staff from the Federal Government

#### **4.1.2 Non-Voting Experts**

In addition to voting members, 1-2 non-voting experts with extensive experience in public sector or subject matter expertise can be invited to join to the Regional Watershed Alliance. These experts could be former TRCA or other CA staff and are not required to be a resident of TRCA's watersheds.

#### **4.1.3 Guests**

The Regional Watershed Alliance meetings are open to the public. Municipal or other agency staff may be invited as guest to offer presentations or participate in discussions on relevant issues. Guests will not have voting privileges nor be eligible for travel expenses to and from meetings.

#### **4.1.4 Chair and Co-Chair or Vice-Chair**

The Chair and Co-Chair or Vice Chair of the Regional Watershed Alliance will be elected from amongst its members for the term of the Alliance. The TRCA Board may appoint an interim Chair until such time as an election can take place.

The Regional Watershed Alliance Chair and Co-Chair or Vice Chair will provide leadership in building a shared vision and commitment for moving forward with the Regional Watershed Alliance's mission, mandate and responsibilities.

The Chair will have the following additional responsibilities:

- Presiding over Regional Watershed Alliance meetings, setting the agenda and generally ensuring the effectiveness of meetings; and
- Recruiting new members to the Regional Watershed Alliance when openings arise.

In the absence of the Chair, the Co-Chair or Vice-Chair will perform the above functions.

#### **4.2 Appointment Process**

##### **TRCA Board Representatives:**

TRCA members will be appointed by the TRCA Board as Ex-officio representatives.

##### **Watershed Residents:**

Applications from watershed residents will be solicited through direct recruitment, announcements in newsletters, local newspapers, web sites, volunteer networks, and through various social media platforms. A committee of TRCA staff and/or Board members will select the Regional Watershed Alliance resident members through the application process using a set of criteria to ensure suitability and eligibility.

##### **Sector Experts and Organizations:**

Select organizations and agencies will be requested by TRCA to appoint a representative.

##### **Municipal Representatives:**

Formal request for appointment of municipal representatives will be made to municipal councils. These representatives will be Ex-officio members.

##### **Provincial and Federal representatives:**

Federal and Provincial representatives (member of Parliament or staff) with specific interest in TRCA's work and jurisdiction in the TRCA watersheds/waterfront will be invited to participate as Ex-officio members.

#### **4.3 Term of Appointment**

Regional Watershed Alliance will be established with a revolving term of up to four years. Members will be appointed for a two term with a possible extension of up to two more years. This will allow for a staggered replacement process maintaining a balance between new and experience members. The membership will be reviewed on an annual basis. Members, excluding ex-officio members, unable to fulfill their commitments will be replaced after missing three consecutive meetings (without notice) by the TRCA Board based on the nominees recommended by TRCA staff.

Notice of resignations and recommendations for new members will be presented to the TRCA

Board for approval on an 'as required' basis.

#### **4.4 Meetings**

Members are required to attend regular, in-person, quarterly evening meetings of the Regional Watershed Alliance and one annual Watershed Forum. Meetings are expected to be approximately three hours in length, at the discretion of the Regional Watershed Alliance. An agenda will be circulated in advance of meetings.

The Chair will have the discretion to call additional meetings, if required. Additional meetings may be required to deal with specific issues from time to time. Some meetings may be held during regular work hours depending on the preference and availability of members and staff or via conference call or online meetings.

Light meals and refreshments will be provided at evening meetings.

#### **4.5 Reporting**

The Regional Watershed Alliance is considered an Advisory Committee of TRCA. The Regional Watershed Alliance will report to the TRCA Board on projects and progress through their meeting minutes or seek TRCA Board approval as necessary on specific initiatives.

The Regional Watershed Alliance is not a formal commenting body regarding review and approval of planning applications or permits.

#### **4.6 Quorum and Governance**

A quorum will consist of voting members in numbers greater than or equal to one-third of the total number of voting members on the Regional Watershed Alliance.

Consensus-based decision making will be the preferred procedure. Formal decisions will be based on a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie the Chair will cast the deciding vote.

#### **4.7 Rules of Conduct**

The Regional Watershed Alliance will adhere to TRCA's Rules of Conduct as adopted by Resolution #A34 at Authority Meeting #2/86, held on March 21, 1986, and as amended periodically. Other TRCA policies may be applicable including Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Volunteer Policy.

#### **4.8 TRCA Staff Support**

The Regional Watershed Alliance will be supported by a team of staff from Watershed Strategies Division including:

- Director, Watershed Strategies
- Watershed Specialists
- Projects Managers
- Administrative Support Staff

. Staff will provide the following support functions:

- Coordination of Regional Watershed Alliance meetings;
- Administrative and financial support;
- Strategic guidance on alignment of RWA work plan priorities with other strategic opportunities;
- The Living City Foundation support for management of any funds collectively raised by the Regional Watershed Alliance or any of its subcommittees that support the implementation of their work plans; and
- TRCA technical expertise on projects and initiatives of the Regional Watershed Alliance and its subcommittees.

#### **4.9 Funding**

Funding will be available for projects and activities of the Regional Watershed Alliance based on approved work plans and available TRCA budget. Members are encouraged to assist in securing other resources and partnerships for Regional Watershed Alliance projects and activities, whenever possible through collective public investment opportunities. In-kind or other support for the projects and activities of the Alliance are welcome from businesses, industries, government agencies, private foundations, educational institutions and others in accordance with TRCA policies. In-kind or other support will be coordinated with the assistance of The Living City Foundation, where appropriate.

#### **5.0 Compensation for Regional Watershed Alliance Members**

At regular Regional Watershed Alliance meetings, as well as Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups, members will be eligible for travel expenses according to TRCA policy, where these are not covered by their agency or other source. The TRCA policy on volunteers is also applicable and can be accessed at: <http://trca.on.ca/get-involved/volunteer/volunteers-and-interns.dot>

#### **6.0 Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups**

The Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups will be standing committees and formed as deemed appropriate by the Regional Watershed Alliance. These committees may solicit local community representatives or experts to participate as needed. Mandate of these subcommittees can be watershed-wide or specifically focused around projects such as watershed plans. The Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups will report to the Regional Watershed Alliance. The supporting TRCA staff will coordinate regular reports to the Regional Watershed Alliance on the activities of these groups.



Items pertaining to the Working Groups will be a standing item on the Agenda of Regional Watershed Alliance meetings.

## **7.0 Youth Council**

The Youth Council will be comprised of community youth champions, existing youth groups representatives and new recruits. The Youth Council will report to the Regional Watershed Alliance.

The mission, mandate and goals, along with the Terms of Reference for the Youth Council will be developed by TRCA and the Regional Watershed Alliance in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

## **8.0 Indigenous Liaison Committee**

The Indigenous Liaison Committee will be comprised of members and experts from different Indigenous communities in TRCA's jurisdiction. They will liaise on Indigenous interests and help build stronger relationships between TRCA and the larger Indigenous population in the jurisdiction. This Committee will advise TRCA Board and staff on matters of community interest and Liaise with the Regional Watershed Alliance on mission driven collective projects. The Committee not have a reporting relationship with the Regional Watershed Alliance or the TRCA Board.

The member(s) of this Committee may have membership on the Regional Watershed Alliance. This Committee will have opportunities to work with the Watershed/Waterfront Working Groups and Youth Council. TRCA staff and relevant stakeholders will collaborate on the development of a Terms of Reference for this Committee.

**Attachment 1: TRCA Citizen Governance Model**

