

FURTHER TO BUSINESS EXCELLENCE ADVISORY BOARD #4/07
To be held Friday, June 1, 2007

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7. SECTION I - ITEMS FOR AUTHORITY ACTION

**7.4 TORONTO REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY**
Memorandum of Understanding

20-22

TO: Chair and Members of the Business Excellence Advisory Board
Meeting #4/07, June 1, 2007

Item 7.4

FROM: Adele Freeman, Director, Watershed Management

RE: TORONTO REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY
Memorandum of Understanding

KEY ISSUE

Recommendation to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Toronto and other organizations and institutions to participate in the governance and activities of the Toronto Regional Centre of Expertise.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS in March 2005, the Mayor of the City of Toronto wrote to the United Nations University requesting that the City of Toronto be included in an international network of Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development;

WHEREAS Toronto received this recognition in May 2005;

WHEREAS the Toronto Environment Office has since worked locally to build a network of education for sustainable development (ESD) stakeholders to form a Steering Committee for the Toronto Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (Toronto RCE);

WHEREAS Toronto's RCE aims to strengthen communication, coordination and collaboration among ESD stakeholders in the Toronto region;

WHEREAS the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) is committed to education for sustainable development pursuant to its strategic plan, The Living City;

AND WHEREAS the Toronto RCE initiative supports the work and partnerships of the TRCA in education for sustainable development;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD RECOMMENDS TO THE AUTHORITY THAT TRCA enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Toronto and other committed organizations and institutions (which as of May 2007 include the founding members of the Toronto RCE, being the University of Toronto, York University, Seneca College, Toronto District School Board, Citizens' Environment Watch, Environment Canada, Education Alliance for a Sustainable Ontario, and Toronto Zoo) to participate in the governance and activities of the Toronto RCE for a term of two years;

THAT the Memorandum of Understanding not obligate the TRCA to provide any direct financial contribution to the Toronto RCE;

THAT the TRCA's Senior Manager, Education, or such position as TRCA may decide, be named as the TRCA representative on the Toronto RCE Steering Committee;

AND FURTHER THAT the appropriate TRCA officials be authorized and directed to take whatever action may be required to give effect thereto, including the obtaining of any necessary approvals and the execution of any documents.

BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2004, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution marking 2005-2014 as the International Decade for Education for Sustainable Development. As a result, the United Nations University (UNU) proposed establishing Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs) throughout the globe. The RCEs are intended to be a forum for strengthening local and international collaboration on education for sustainable development.

In 2005, the opportunity to apply for status as an RCE was brought to the City by the Toronto Zoo. The Mayor of the City of Toronto subsequently wrote to the UNU requesting that Toronto be considered as a site for an RCE. As a result, Toronto was selected as one of seven RCEs. Since that time, the international network has grown to include thirty-five RCEs, including the province of Saskatchewan and Sudbury, Ontario, here in Canada.

In April 2006, City of Toronto staff convened a meeting of major educational institutions (i.e., school boards, universities and colleges) and major social, environmental, and economic stakeholder groups to inform them about the International Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, and the intention to establish a RCE in Toronto. In subsequent follow-up meetings, the details of a Memorandum of Understanding as well as project ideas for the Toronto RCE were developed.

As of May, 2007, the following organizations and institutions have agreed to participate in the governance and activities of the Toronto RCE and, subject to approvals, will be signing the Memorandum of Understanding:

- City of Toronto
- University of Toronto
- York University
- Seneca College
- Toronto District School Board
- Citizens' Environment Watch
- Environment Canada
- Education Alliance for a Sustainable Ontario
- Toronto Zoo
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

RATIONALE

The Memorandum of Understanding represents a significant milestone in the development of the Toronto RCE. It represents the first time a group of institutional, governmental, and non-governmental stakeholders in Toronto have come together to take a coordinated approach to education for sustainable development. In the context of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA's) The Living City strategic plan and communication, outreach and education programs, the Toronto RCE provides the opportunity to secure expert advice and support in disseminating information about environmental issues, and in encouraging watershed citizens to adjust their lifestyles to include more sustainable behaviours. By participating in the Toronto RCE Steering Committee, TRCA will continue to demonstrate that it is a leader - both locally and internationally - on environmental sustainability issues.

PROVISIONS OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

- The MOU provides that the Toronto RCE be governed by a steering committee, made up of one representative from each of the ten founding parties, and makes provision for the addition of membership on the steering committee up to a maximum representation of twenty organizations/institutions.
- The steering committee will provide the overall direction for Toronto RCE activities and makes provision for the establishment of working groups to assist in approved activities and projects.
- Each party will devote such time, attention and ability as may be necessary to operate the Toronto RCE.
- The City of Toronto Environment Office will provide Secretariat functions for the Toronto RCE.
- Liability and indemnification is addressed, including that each party be liable for its own costs and expenses in connection with the Toronto RCE and each party indemnify all other parties.
- Intellectual property and confidential information is addressed including that each party owns its own work products in connection with the Toronto RCE and each party operates under prescribed confidentiality and disclosure criteria.
- The term of the MOU is set out as commencing from the date signed and continues for two years. Any party may terminate its involvement at any time upon thirty (30) days prior written notice to the other parties.

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