

2024 Environmental Initiatives Report

Date: March 17, 2025

To: Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo

From: Director, Project Management

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report provides an update to the Board of Management on the Toronto Zoo's environmental priorities and initiatives achieved in 2024, as part of its commitment to advancing sustainability and achieving net-zero operations by 2030. Throughout the year, your Zoo has continued to implement projects that enhance energy efficiency, water conservation, waste diversion, and biodiversity restoration, while fostering employee engagement and community participation to further reduce its overall carbon footprint and contribute to climate resilience within the local ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Project Management recommends that:

1. The Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

In 2006, your Toronto Zoo developed its first comprehensive environmental sustainability framework, the Greenprint, followed by the 2007 Green Plan, which established long-term environmental goals and strategies to significantly reduce the Zoo's operational ecological footprint by 2027.

Building on these foundations and in response to the evolving understanding of climate change and sustainability best practices, your Zoo adopted the TZNet0 Environmental Sustainability Plan in 2022. The plan set ambitious targets to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, providing clear strategic direction to Zoo staff and aligning operations with national and international climate commitments.

COMMENTS

The 2024 Environmental Initiatives Report highlights your Toronto Zoo's progress and achievements in advancing sustainability initiatives aligned with the TZNet0 Plan. Key accomplishments in 2024 include:

- Continued reductions in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, supported by energy retrofits, heat pump installations, and expanded fleet electrification initiatives.
- Significant improvements in water conservation, including the deployment of seven floating wetlands for stormwater management and enhanced water quality, as well as public engagement initiatives such as the Rain Barrel Sale, promoting residential water stewardship.
- Expansion of waste diversion programs and successful attainment of Circular Economy Certification, reinforcing the Zoo's commitment to waste reduction and responsible resource use.
- Restoration of 7 acres of aquatic and terrestrial habitats, supporting native species, improving ecosystem connectivity, and advancing climate resilience within Zoo-managed lands and the surrounding watershed.
- Increased community engagement and education, demonstrated through initiatives like Network of Nature tree planting events and volunteer-supported conservation activities.

The Toronto Zoo continues to demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship, leveraging internal expertise, innovative sustainability projects, and strategic partnerships to advance toward its net-zero 2030 goal.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - 2024 Environmental Initiatives Report