

# BUILDING AN ENDURING RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS PARTNERS

USING SUSTAINABILITY IN  
BUSINESS STRATEGY

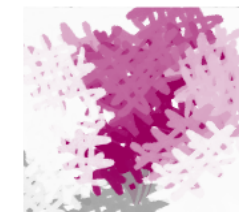
An IDEA Cohort Project :  
Toronto Botanical Garden  
May 2023



ASPIRE



ALIGN



INCUBATE

# PROJECT CHARTER

May 2022

## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

To build a sustainable public garden using an indigenous stewardship model

## INTRODUCTION

Indigenous peoples are stewards of the world's biodiversity and cultural diversity. Although they account for only around 5 percent of the world's population, they effectively manage an estimated 20-25 per cent of the Earth's land surface. This land coincides with areas that hold 80 per cent of the planet's biodiversity and about 40 per cent of all terrestrial protected areas and ecologically intact landscapes. Indigenous peoples therefore play a key role in efforts to protect the planet and biodiversity.<sup>1</sup>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Genuine participation of indigenous peoples in co-creating knowledge and sustainable garden design by promoting dialogue among indigenous peoples; local communities; TBG membership; academic partners; knowledge experts; and policymakers to enable design and implementation of sustainable strategies.

## IDEA PRIMARY CONTACTS

Stephanie Jutila, Executive Director; Roger Gettig, Director, Horticulture; Margareth Lobo Gault, Board Director

## PARTICIPANTS

TBG Board of Directors, Expansion Committee, Mission-Vision Sub Committee, and Senior Leadership Team; Bob Goulais, Nbisiiing Consulting, Inc.; City of Toronto Indigenous Affairs Offices; Indigenous Community Members; Mississaugas of the Credit, Treaty Holder; PMA Landscape Architects Ltd.

## RESOURCES

Most of initial work will be part of ongoing Development and Learning activities

## KEY MILESTONES

- Ongoing work of Board committees (e.g., Mission/Vision and Expansion)
- Indigenous Community Workshop (April 2022)
- Include Indigenous Artists in our Summer Music Series (July 2022)
- Initial engagement with Mississaugas of the Credit (September 2022)
- Indigenous Awareness Training for staff and Board members (December 2022 and April 2023, shifting to ongoing as we continue to learn deeper)
- APGA Sustainability Framework included in strategic plan (April 2023)
- TBG Library establishes Indigenous teachings and resources are, available to staff, garden members, volunteers and general public (April 2023)
- Adoption of new Mission and Vision for TBG that uplifts Indigenous values (Board Meeting May 2023)
- 'Nîpiy's Songwalks' World Premiere at TBG (May 2023)
- IDEA Cohort Project Toolkit (May 2023)
- Annual General Meeting (June 2023)
- Post IDEA Cohort, continue to deepen relationship with Indigenous community and expand TBG team participation

## POTENTIAL RISKS

Membership and public perception of lack/insufficiency of indigenous content/involvement in program and design

# OUR STORY

## IDEA PROJECT

TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN | MAY 2023

### LEARN . UNDERSTAND. ACT.

Our ambition to be a respected cultural and natural leader of international stature will be centred on an open, honoured and enduring partnership with Indigenous Peoples as co-stewards of a sustainable social, economic and environmental world.

2020

### THE OPENING MOMENT

2022

#### SET A WINNING AMBITION

Aspiring to becoming a purpose-led botanical garden, cultivating a community with a profound connection to nature, and inspiring impact in our unique ecosystem and beyond

2020

#### OUR HARD RESTART

A post-pandemic convergence of inner and outer turmoil: new Executive Director; Board of new directors; financial instability; and approval of a 10-fold, multi-million dollar expansion of the garden's footprint.

#### CANADA'S MOMENT

The fifth anniversary of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a reminder of the still-unfulfilled 94 Calls to Action



BUILD

01

2021-2022

#### ACQUIRED TALENT AND PARTNERS

Continuing rebuilding - making foundational investments in garden, data, brand, people and processes: to stabilize the organization; and build new ways of interacting with the City of Toronto and the Indigenous community.

02



ASPIRE

THE COHORT MOMENT



ALIGN

03

2023

#### MAPPED THE WAY

A contemporary restating of the TBG vision and mission, a five-year strategic plan fueled by, and aligned with, the APGA Sustainability Framework that keeps TBG living more deeply, with expectations beyond just profit margins.

2025 AND ONWARD

### THE LEARNING MOMENT

2026 to 2027  
BLOSSOMING

Embracing community collaboration to fuel growth and impact on our site and beyond - using the spirit and knowledge of Indigenous partners to sustainably co-steward our common home.

04



INCUBATE

2024

#### SPROUTING AND GROWING

Re-introduce TBG and its impact to diverse new audiences and partners; building an engaged community, built on an authentic acknowledgement of the historical stewardship of the land by Indigenous Peoples.

# THE OPENING MOMENT

## 2020

### DURING THE PANDEMIC

Business continuity during the pandemic years (Canada was primarily in lockdown from March 2020-February 2022) with skeleton on-site staff; visitors had access to garden and adjacent Edwards Gardens; membership and public access online programs

Staffing: high staff turnover during pandemic; Board Chair and Executive Director positions in transition

### A HARD RESTART

A post-pandemic convergence of inner and outer turmoil: new Executive Director; new Board Chair; Board largely new directors; financial instability; and

After approval of a 10-fold, multi-million-dollar expansion of the garden's footprint – small group of Board and staff oversaw the hiring of landscape architect to take a Site Master Plan through design development

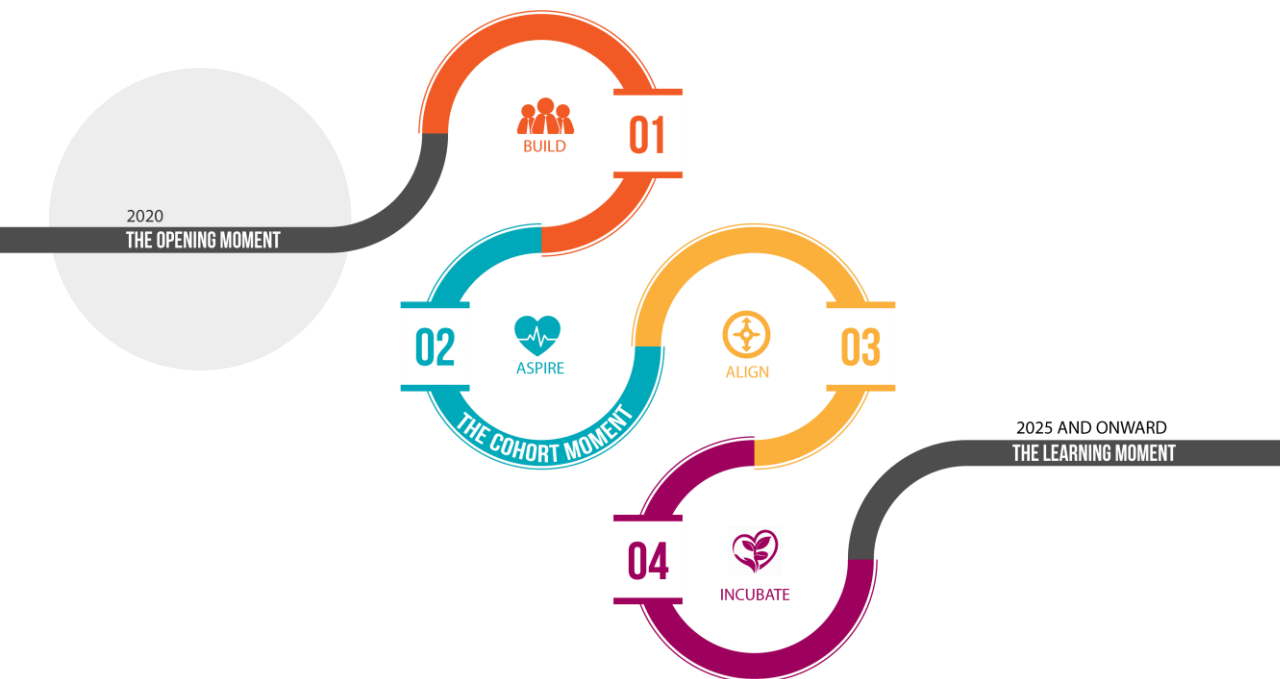
### CANADA'S MOMENT



The fifth anniversary of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a reminder of the still-unfulfilled 94 Calls to Action

### INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

There was pressure to include Indigenous input in the Expansion design process; this was contracted out by the Landscape Architect to Consultants with limited involvement of TBG staff; input from Indigenous community was restricted to focus groups



# 01 BUILD

2021-2022

Continuing rebuilding - making foundational investments in garden, data, brand, people and processes: to stabilize the organization; and build new ways of interacting with the City of Toronto and Indigenous community



## INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

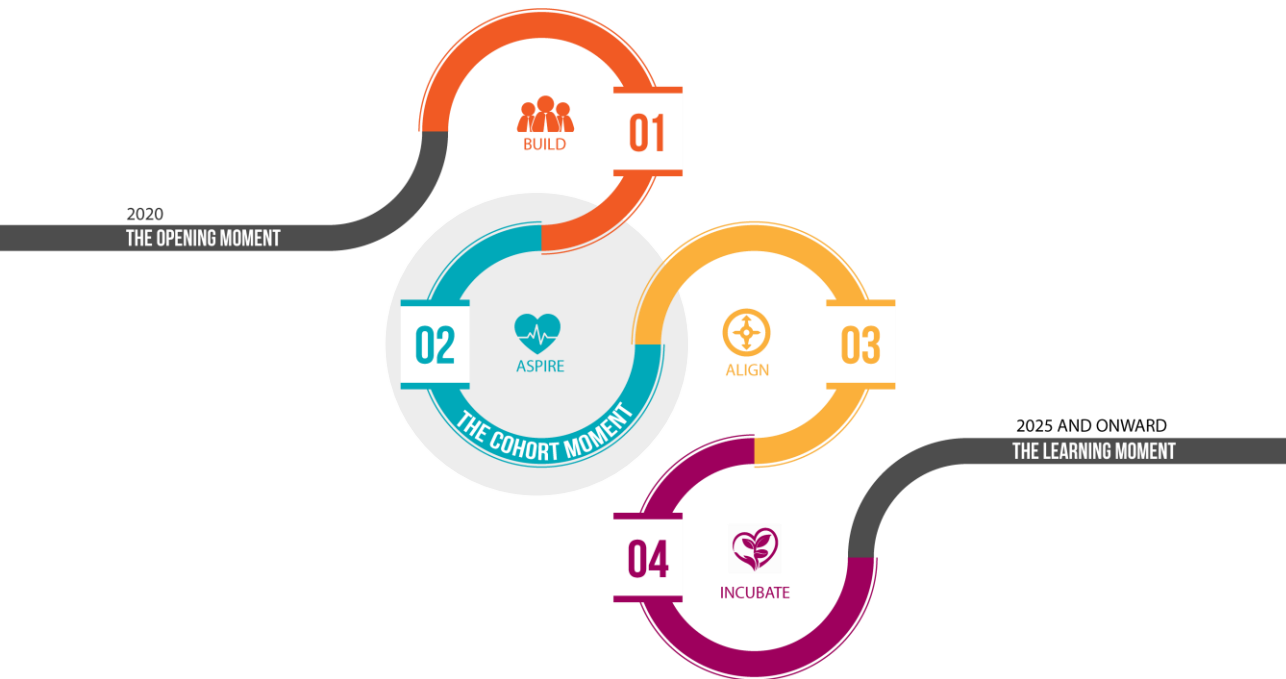
Formal relationship between TBG and the Mississaugas of the Credit (treaty holder for the land on which TBG stewards) begins but gets slow start as the Indigenous Community has so many requests as Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action are activated.

Also in early 2021, majority of the Indigenous engagement was through the sub-consultant to the Landscape Architect and was not focused on relationship building.

## 02 ASPIRE

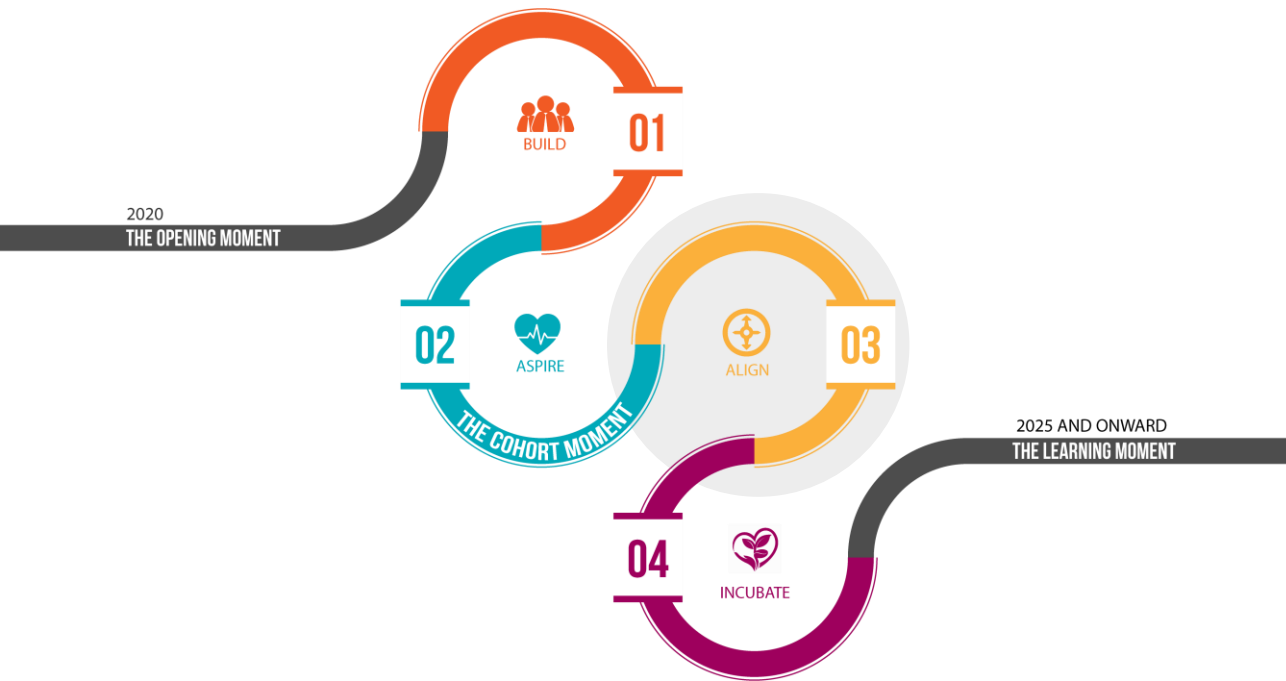
2022

Aspiring to becoming a purpose-led botanical garden, cultivating a community with a profound connection to nature, and inspiring impact in our unique ecosystem and beyond



### INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

Continued focus on building relationship with Mississaugas of the Credit (treaty holder for the land on which TBG stewards) and Indigenous Community, while also increasing training and understanding across TBG board and staff.



## 03 ALIGN

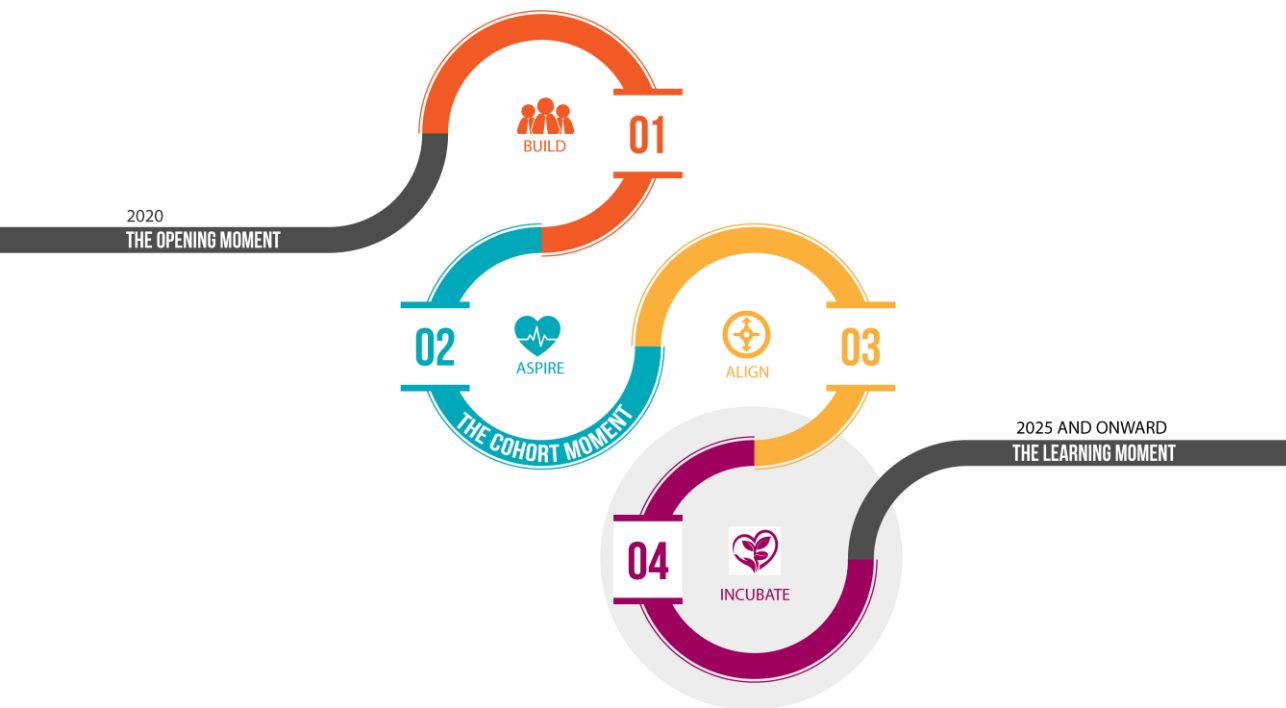
2023

A contemporary restating of the TBG vision and mission, a five-year strategic plan fueled by, and aligned with, the APGA Sustainability Framework that keeps TBG living more deeply, with expectations beyond just profit margins.

### INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

Continued focus on building relationship with Mississaugas of the Credit (treaty holder for the land on which TBG stewards) and the many nations that have traditionally called the region home, while increasing training and understanding across TBG board and staff.

Increase investment in Indigenous relations, programming, and reciprocal relationships.



## 04 INCUBATE

2024

Re-introduce TBG to diverse new audiences and partners; building an engaged community, built on an authentic acknowledgement of the historical stewardship of the land by Indigenous Peoples.

### INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

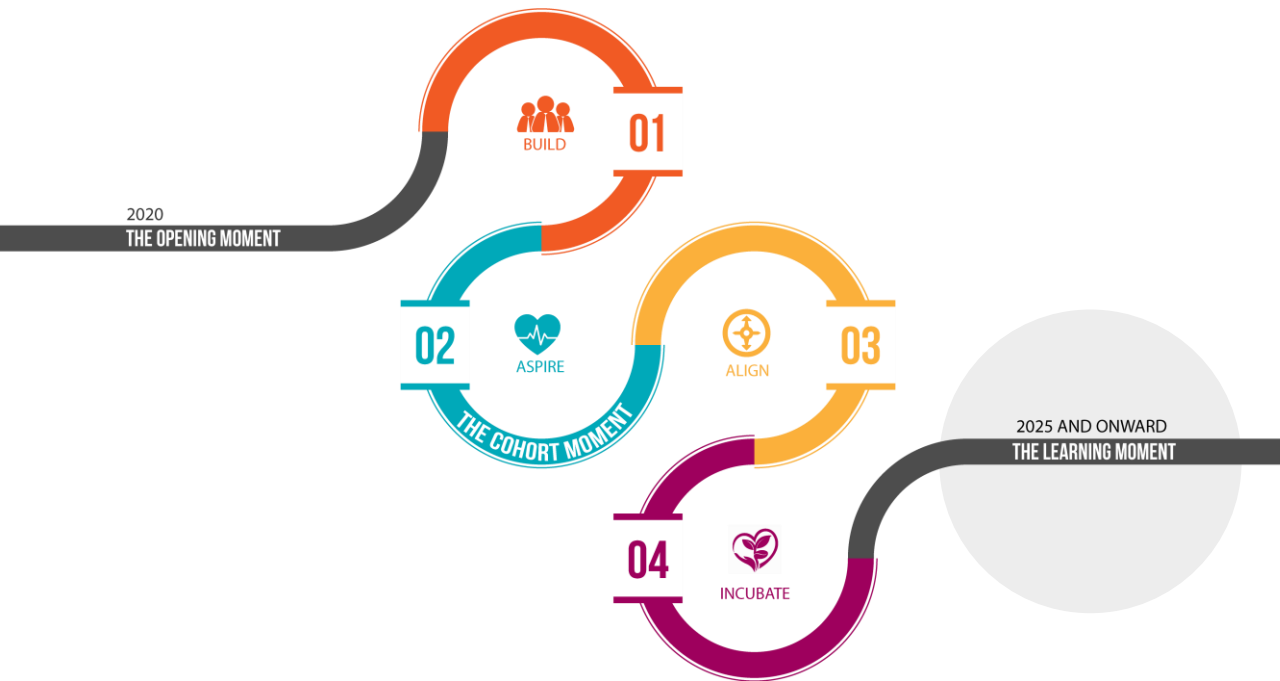
Continued focus on building relationship with Mississaugas of the Credit (treaty holder for the land on which TBG stewards) and the many nations that have traditionally called the region home, while also increasing training and understanding across TBG board and staff.

Increase investment in Indigenous relations, programming, and reciprocal relationships.

# THE LEARNING MOMENT

## 2025 AND ONWARD

Embracing community collaboration to fuel growth and impact on our site and beyond - using the spirit and knowledge of Indigenous partners to sustainably co-steward our common home.



### INDIGENOUS RELATIONS

Continued focus on building relationship with Mississaugas of the Credit (treaty holder for the land on which TBG stewards) and the many nations that have traditionally called the region home, while increasing training and understanding across TBG board and staff.

Increase investment in Indigenous relations, programming, and reciprocal relationships recognizing that we have more to learn and understand.

# ADDENDUM

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS RELATIONS IN CANADA

[www.itcinc.ca](http://www.itcinc.ca)

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS RELATIONS IN CANADA

This is an abbreviated timeline of decrees, Acts, policies, reports and events that have shaped Indigenous history in Canada.

#### 1763 ● The Royal Proclamation

Signed by King George III giving limited recognition of title to Indigenous communities and providing guidelines for negotiating treaties on a nation-to-nation basis.

#### 1876 ● Indian Act, 1876

Consolidation of Indian policies

#### 1953 ● Inuit relocation

The federal government forcefully moves Inuit from Inukjuak in northern Québec to Ellesmere and Cornwallis Islands

#### 1982 ● Canadian Constitution Act, 1982

Aboriginal and treaty rights (s.35) entrenched in the supreme law of Canada

#### 2008 ● Formal apology

Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivers the formal apology to residential school survivors and their families

#### 2019 ● Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Inquiry

Report published

#### ● 1400s Doctrine of Discovery

A means of legitimizing the colonization of lands outside of Europe.  
Christopher Columbus arrives in the Americas

#### ● 1867 British North America Act (now known as Constitution Act, 1867)

Colonial responsibility for Indigenous peoples and lands is transferred to the new federal government

#### ● 1885 Northwest Rebellion

Métis and their allies lead the five-month Northwest Resistance against the federal government in what is now Saskatchewan and Alberta

#### ● 1960s The Sixties Scoop

Thousands of Indigenous babies and children are taken from their families and placed in boarding schools or foster homes of middle-class Euro-Canadian families

#### ● 1996 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

Report recommends a public inquiry into the effects of residential schools

#### ● 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Report published

# ADDENDUM

## APGA SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

APRIL 2023

### IMPACT SUSTAINABILITY

APGA's Public Gardens  
Sustainability Index...

A suite of attributes to help:

- advance garden sustainability programs
- advance sustainability of operations
- connect to local, national, and global sustainability efforts



AMERICAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION



TORONTO  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN

# ADDENDUM

## TOMORROW'S CHILD

### RAY ANDERSON , INTERFACE CARPETING

The business logic of  
sustainability

Read [Mission Zero's success story](#)

In 1994, [Interface](#) began its journey to transform its business to have zero negative impact on the planet by the year 2020.

Later named Mission Zero®, the global flooring manufacturer aimed to achieve this mission by setting aggressive sustainability targets after Founder Ray Anderson's famous "spear in the chest moment" that changed his perspective on business and sustainability.

Interface significantly decreased its impact on the environment by focusing on three key areas of its business – its factories, products, and supply chain.

Over the past 25 years, the company deeply reduced its operational footprint, reducing waste, energy, and water usage, while accomplishing major milestones like creating the ReEntry® Reclamation and Recycling program, achieving carbon neutrality across the full product life cycle for all of the flooring products it sells, and developing the world's first cradle-to-gate carbon negative carpet tile.

Through Mission Zero, Interface inspired others, and its innovations laid the groundwork for both competitors and those

outside the industry to follow with more sustainable business practices.

In November 2019, Interface announced Mission Zero success ahead of its original 2020 target and turned its full attention to its next mission, [Climate Take Back™](#), which aims to reverse global warming.

As it looks to the future, Interface is working ardently to become a carbon negative enterprise by 2040 and to develop processes and products that create a positive impact on the world.

Ray Anderson gave a profound and powerful [TED Talk](#) about his decades-deep commitment to sustainable ways of doing business through his carpet company Interface — culminating in the "Mission Zero" plan.

During the talk he read a poem written by one of his employees, Glenn Thomas, after Glenn heard Ray talk. Ray would often end his speeches by reciting the poem.

This is [Tomorrow's Child](#).

# ADDENDUM

SUSTAINABILITY,  
STRATEGIC PLAN AND  
THE INDIGENOUS  
RELATIONSHIP:

BOARD PRESENTATION  
APRIL 2023

## UNITING OUR STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

## How our 4 strategic pieces come together



## Why is sustainability crucial for corporate strategy?



### Key reasons for TBG to have a triple bottom line

- Our business imperative (land and water)
- Regulatory requirements
- Customer expectations
- Donor/sponsor demands
- Inclusive organization
- Building social capital

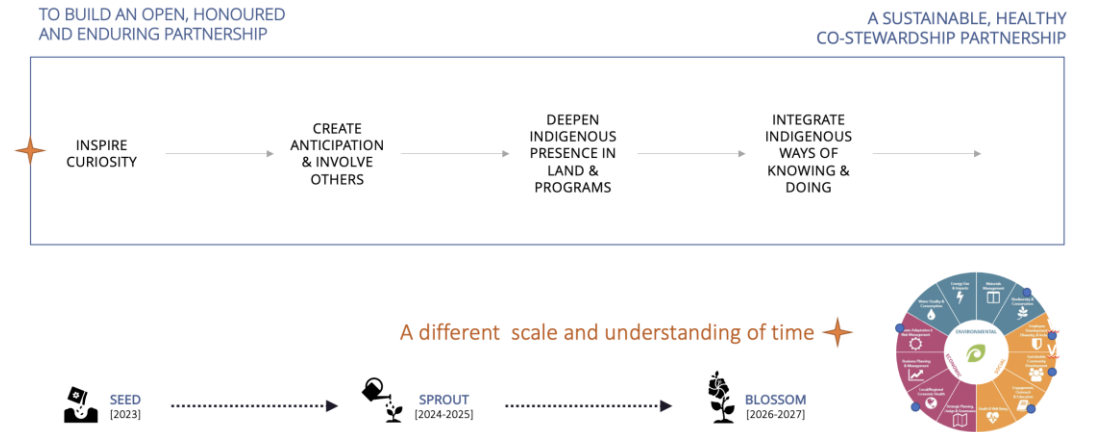
*"With the level of demand for sustainability only set to increase globally, embedding sustainability into corporate strategy is essential for any company to remain relevant and competitive in the coming years." World Economic Forum 2022*

ADDENDUM:  
SUSTAINABILITY, STRATEGIC  
PLAN AND THE INDIGENOUS  
RELATIONSHIP

## Our strategic plan is built on these sustainability elements

	SEED [2023]	SPROUT [2024-2025]	BLOSSOM [2026-2027]
	Foundational investments into garden, data, brand, people & processes	Reintroducing TBG and its impact to diverse new audiences and partners; building an engaged community	Embracing community collaboration to fuel growth and impact on-site and beyond
ORGANIZATION		Greater public awareness, win-win long term partners, ready for expansion, broaden donor base ✦	Grow national/international presence, mission-based giving, trusted brand
DEVELOPMENT		Grow revenue, engage donors	Culture of philanthropy ✦
FINANCE		Position systems for growth, support decisions ✦	Ability to respond quickly and strategically
FACILITIES		Enhance visitor experiences	Showcase of sustainability and education ✦
HORTICULTURE		Consistent high-quality and enhances audience experiences ✦	Fuel preparedness for expansion & world-class experiences
LEARNING + OUTREACH		Expand learning to reach diverse audiences	Amplifying voices to push botanical garden boundaries ✦
MARKETING		Build brand and public awareness ✦	Growing audience and engagement
RETAIL		Invest in staff + volunteers, dynamic product experience ✦	Investing in space to become destination shop
STABILITY BENCH STRENGTH		Impact and engaged community. Diverse audiences. ✦	Focused growth and greater impact. Embracing community collaboration.
STRONG FOUNDATION		An inspiring plant place. Engaged community.	Cultural and natural leader. World class.

## Sustainability example – our indigenous engagement priority



ADDENDUM:  
SUSTAINABILITY, STRATEGIC  
PLAN AND THE INDIGENOUS  
RELATIONSHIP

# ADDENDUM

## MAPPING OF IDEA PROJECT STAGES AND POSSIBLE TOUCH POINTS

MAY 2022

IDEA Cohort Project (Toronto Botanical Garden)

Mapping of Project Stages

GOAL		COLLABORATORS	PROGRESSION OF RELATIONSHIP WITH TREATY HOLDERS										LONG RUN ACCOMPLISHMENT	A sustainable, healthy co-stewardship/partnership with Treaty holders that is a model for (Truth and Reconciliation)
To build an open, honoured and enduring partnership with our Treaty holders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TBG Board</li><li>• Senior Leadership</li><li>• Staff</li><li>• Members</li><li>• Garden Club</li><li>• Master Gardeners</li><li>• Volunteers</li><li>• Treaty holders</li></ul>	Inspire curiosity and connect emotionally	Build a compelling vision that includes indigenous partners	Create anticipation	Involve others as needed	Embed in Expansion work	Create touch points in TBG services	Deepen indigenous presence in all programs	Integrate indigenous advice in TBG work	Co-stewardship of areas of the public garden			
TBG BUSINESS														
Examples of activities	STRATEGY	Dec 16 Indigenous Awareness workshop	Vision and mission Branding H&F Fundraising		Create dedicated committee to project(?)									
	PROGRAMMING	ED piece in Trellis signalling that relationship is progressing  Series of indigenous awareness seminars for staff and volunteers		Trellis  Series of indigenous-related talks, book launches, cooking events for members and volunteers	On agenda of significant TBG events <sup>1</sup>	Landscape design and native plant choices	Increase indigenous content in programs  Webinars	Indigenous delivery	Indigenous staff in technical advisory roles					
	OPERATIONS	Visual merchandising and signage  Rentals		Visual merchandising and signage  Rentals	Visual merchandising and signage  Rentals	Visual merchandising and signage  Rentals	Recruitment and onboarding		Indigenous garden crew leaders  (Allan Colley)					
	DELIVERY	Public-facing roles (e.g., tour guides, reception, library)		Public-facing roles (e.g., tour guides, reception, library)			Public-facing roles (e.g., tour guides, reception, library)							
TOUCH POINT WITH CURRENT PROJECTS														
	INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIP	x	x	x			x	x	x	x				
	STRATEGIC PLANNING		x	x	x					x				
	EXPANSION	x		x	x	x	x			x				
	(INDIGENOUS SUB-COMMITTEE)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
ECOSYSTEM REFERENCES												Sustainable and resilient community		
Collection of species; colonizers; competition for resources		Community development: commensalism; mutualism; niche development; resource partnering; and succession												

<sup>1</sup> Opportunities: Ravine Symposium; Master Gardeners Technical Update; Garden Club meetings; Through the Garden Gate; Annual Plant Sale; North American Native Plant Society AGM and meetings

TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT<sup>1</sup>

### BACKGROUND

Toronto Botanical Garden operates on 3.6 acres of City of Toronto land, governed by a negotiated operator agreement. In 2018 the City of Toronto approved the notion of Toronto Botanical Garden expanding its operatorship to include the 35 acres of existing park space. The City and the Garden are currently working on the timeline for operatorship transition.

The City of Toronto has been acknowledging the traditional territory since March 2014. Due to conversations with Indigenous leaders, including the Aboriginal Advisory Committee as part of the 2018 [Toronto for All](#) campaign, the language the City of Toronto uses has evolved. In 2022 the City of Toronto adopted the city's first [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) to advance truth, justice and reconciliation for the next ten years, from 2022 to 2032. It builds on the City's existing commitments to Indigenous Peoples and takes them even further through 28 meaningful actions across five themes.

### PRESENT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*The (City of Toronto) acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit,*

---

<sup>1</sup> Much of the background and land acknowledgement comes from [The City of Toronto Land Acknowledgement](#) website

# ADDENDUM

## TBG LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

MARCH 2023

ADDENDUM:  
TBG LAND  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
STATEMENT

*and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.*

DEVELOPMENT OF OUR LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Indigenous peoples have acknowledged the land at the start of gatherings, ceremonies and events. With the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, more non-Indigenous people are becoming aware of the importance.

In 2022, when the Garden began to work deeper to build reciprocal relations with Indigenous Communities, the Garden took inventory of the various Land Acknowledgements that had been utilized at TBG. The Garden is working in partnership with our Indigenous Community to streamline the various land acknowledgements that have been used over a period of years by the Toronto Botanical Garden.

What is the intent of the statement?

- Our Indigenous partners remind us to "enter the room humbly."*
- To give space to Indigenous Peoples

To take part in an act of reconciliation, honouring the land and Indigenous presence which dates back over 10,000 years.

To self-reflect and patiently listen to the pain we have caused our Indigenous Peoples.

To make this part of our everyday conversation, and part of how we act in all aspects of our work.

What work should precede and/or follow it?

TBG's IDEA Cohort Project is a rebuilding of our relationship with Indigenous Peoples and Treaty Holders, progressing over a long period of time. Implementation of the project began in the Fall of 2022.

Project progress:

We have been working throughout the Expansion project in consultation with the Toronto Council Fire, and Bob Goulais, an Indigenous advisor.

All staff attended an all-day Indigenous Awareness Workshop in December 2022; the Board of Directors will attend this workshop in April 2023.

Focused study and understanding of the City of Toronto's Reconciliation Action Plan and the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission Action Plan.

The next step is a mutually developed acknowledgement that signals development of a positive relationship, built from the bottom-up: staff to leadership team; and in partnership with our Indigenous partners.

How would the statement be displayed and employed at your organization?

To be honest, we are learning and observing best practices in this area. Considerations include:

Posted as part of our virtual and footprint such as website, online programming, social media

At the opening of each TBG event; and meetings of staff, senior leadership, and the Board of Directors.

Displayed in meaningful and reflective ways throughout the building and grounds.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STRATEGIC PLAN

## APPENDIX B

Visualization of word frequency in previous land acknowledgements used by Toronto Botanical Garden

# ADDENDUM: TBG LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

# PROJECT RESOURCES

## TRADITIONAL WAYS OF KNOWING

United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs: Challenges and Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples' Sustainability. April 2021.

[www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/04/PB\\_101.pdf](http://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/04/PB_101.pdf)

Integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge and World Renewal Ceremonies into Fire Adaptation: An Indigenous Stewardship Model. Bill Tripp. January 2018. [Fire Adapted Communities Network](#).

[On the Role of Traditional Ecological Knowledge as a Collaborative Concept: A Philosophical Study](#). Kyle Powys Whyte, [University of Michigan](#). October 2012.

[Take only what you need: Indigenous lessons in sovereignty and sustainability](#). October 2021.

Indigenous Worldviews v. Western Worldviews. January 2016. From [Indigenous Corporate Training](#). Accessed April 2023

## HERITAGE AND CULTURE

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs. Accessed May 2023.

[Onondaga Nation's 'Seven Buffalo Maple Syrup Co.' taps into traditions](#). Central Current News, Syracuse, New York. April 2023

[Key Moments in Indigenous History](#). Historica Canada. Accessed May 2023

[Indigenous Relations Timeline Infographic](#). From Indigenous Corporate Training (Accessed May 2023)

## RECONCILIATION

True Reconciliation: How to Be a Force for Change. Judy Raybould Wilson. Penguin Random House. 2022

[What Are the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action & How Are We Working Toward Achieving Them Today?](#). Reconciliation Education. First Nations University of Canada. Accessed May 2023

## SUSTAINABILITY

[From Mission Zero to Climate Take Back: How Interface is Transforming its Business to Have Zero Negative Impact](#). United Nations Climate Action (Accessed May 2023)

Why sustainability is crucial for corporate strategy. Talal Rafi [World Economic Forum](#) (June 9, 2022)

[Public Gardens Sustainability Index](#). American Public Gardens Association