



Mayor's Millennial Advisory Committee

Delegation to Committee of the Whole

Monday 8 July 2019

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Subject

Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) and consideration of Municipal Development Corporation (MDC). Report Number: MO-04-19.

Background

At a pivotal time in Burlington and this region broadly, it is imperative that Burlington is proactive about its economic development opportunities and outcomes. With a change in leadership at the BEDC and on city council along with the results of the Red Tape Red Carpet (RTRC) Task Force, we have an excellent opportunity to review the structure of the BEDC and TechPlace and to assess the efficacy of establishing a Municipal Development Corporation to acquire, maintain and develop lands and assets within the City of Burlington. It is important that the research conducted by the consultants does not overlap with existing work or work that has already been completed by city staff or previous consultants. The focus should be on what works now and what will work in the future for Burlington. It is about looking at whether streamlined services will result in cost savings and whether an alternative structure will still position the city to achieve its business and attraction goals.

MDC initiatives are not unprecedented in Ontario. Even our neighbours in Oakville have embarked successfully on similar initiatives. MDC's provide an opportunity for municipalities to manage development and to maximize the value that is provided to the community. It is important that this is an avenue that Burlington considers when we all recognize that land is scarce and even more so when we think about land that we currently have control over. Establishing a Burlington MDC is an opportunity to shape our future for generations to come while ensuring the effective management of the public wealth of our city. An MDC is not exclusively about economic development, it's about creating spaces that enhance the communities that we live; sometimes in the form of parks and community spaces.

Considerations

- The Mayor's Millennial Advisory Committee supports the recommended request for proposal on efficiency effectiveness and optimal structure of the BEDC and Tech Place in achieving the cities business attraction and retention goals.
- We also support a review of the opportunities and optimal structure of an MDC in achieving the city's business attraction and retention goals.
- We agree with the recommendation in the report that the Mayor and the City Manager should be authorized to form a steering committee to develop terms of reference, oversee the work of the consultants, engage council and the BEDC/TechPlace staff and board in the process.
- We believe that this strategic initiative should be included in a time dated action item under the city manager.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this is a review that we support because we think that the information gathered from this will provide Burlington with what it needs to make important decisions supporting the structure of the BEDC and TechPlace and whether an MDC will help Burlington achieve its business goals in attraction and retention.

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