



**SUBJECT: Burlington Economic Development Strategic Planning Overview and 2020 Priorities**

**TO: Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.**

**FROM: Burlington Economic Development Corporation**

Report Number: BEDC-01-20

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 125

Date to Committee: March 10, 2020

Date to Council: March 30, 2020

---

**Recommendation:**

Receive and file burlington economic development corporation report BEDC-01-20 regarding Strategic Planning Overview and 2020 Performance Management Plan.

**PURPOSE:**

**Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth

**Executive Summary:**

This document provides an overview of Burlington Economic Development's mandate, strategy, and 2020 Board approved priorities. A summary of our 2020 priorities is as follows:

**Land Readiness & Intensification**

- Community Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Municipal Development Corporation (MDC)

**Business Growth & Entrepreneurship**

- TechPlace Business Model

### **Business Attractive Brand**

- One Brand
- Investment Attraction
- GO Corridor Vision and Master Planning
- Institutional Attraction

### **21st Century Organization**

- Governance Review
- Integrated Customer Service Experience

### **Emerging Opportunities and Priorities**

- Priorities are subject to change based on emerging opportunities throughout the year - two confidential appendices are included for opportunities associated with business attraction and retention that are confidential and an update will be provided to Committee on these matters in closed session.

---

## **Background and Discussion:**

### **Burlington Economic Development's Mandate and Structure**

Burlington Economic Development was established in 1994 as a not-for-profit funded primarily by the City of Burlington with a mandate to deliver economic development services for the City of Burlington. The key objectives for Burlington Economic Development as set out by its Articles of Incorporation and By-laws are to:

- (a) promote economic development in the City of Burlington with the cooperation and participation of the community by encouraging, facilitating and supporting community strategic planning and increasing self-reliance, investment and job creation within the community;
- (b) promote and encourage business activity, industrial and commercial development and employment in the City of Burlington;
- (c) promote the development of training and retraining programs to meet the needs of businesses in the City of Burlington;
- (d) provide practical business advice and assistance to small business in the City of Burlington;
- (e) assist new entrepreneurs and new small-scale businesses to become established in the City of Burlington;
- (f) encourage business retention and expansion as well as attracting new investment in the City of Burlington;

- (g) assist and cooperate with any individual, corporation, business or other body or organization having similar objects and operating now or at any time in the future in the City of Burlington;
- (h) promote and support policies and activities designed to ensure the continuing availability of serviced employment land in the City of Burlington; and
- (i) participate in activities and transactions designed to provide for a sufficient supply of serviced employment lands in the City of Burlington.

Burlington Economic Development is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors which is composed of the Mayor, Council appointees, City Manager, and business community representatives. The Board oversees the development of Burlington Economic Development's strategic plan and operations providing insights from the business community.

### **Burlington Economic Development's Strategy**

As part of the City of Burlington 2015-2040 Strategic Plan process, Burlington Economic Development, in partnership with stakeholders, developed a 10-year Economic Vision for our city. Burlington Economic Vision 2025 acted as both a standalone economic strategy which outlines in detail our vision for Burlington's economy and is also fully integrated into the City of Burlington 2015-2040 Strategic Plan. In 2018, Burlington Council approved the new 4-year work plan [2018-22 Burlington's Plan: From Vision to Focus](#) that prioritizes key strategic directions from Burlington's long-term [25-year Strategic Plan](#) and details key goals and strategic actions required to move these priorities forward during this term of Council.

In 2018, the Burlington Economic Development Board approved a new Strategic Plan 2018-2022 based on the Burlington Economic Vision 2025, Burlington's long-term 25-year Strategic Plan, and an updated analysis of the underlying elements of Economic Vision 2025 that included an updated competitive analysis and Burlington baseline analysis incorporating 2016 census data. The Burlington Economic Development Strategic Plan 2018-2022: Our Vision for Growth aims to:

- Keep Burlington competitive,
- Attract and grow innovative companies, and
- Develop an attractive 21<sup>st</sup>-century city.

To support these Key Objectives Burlington Economic Development's Strategic Plan has four Strategic Directions:

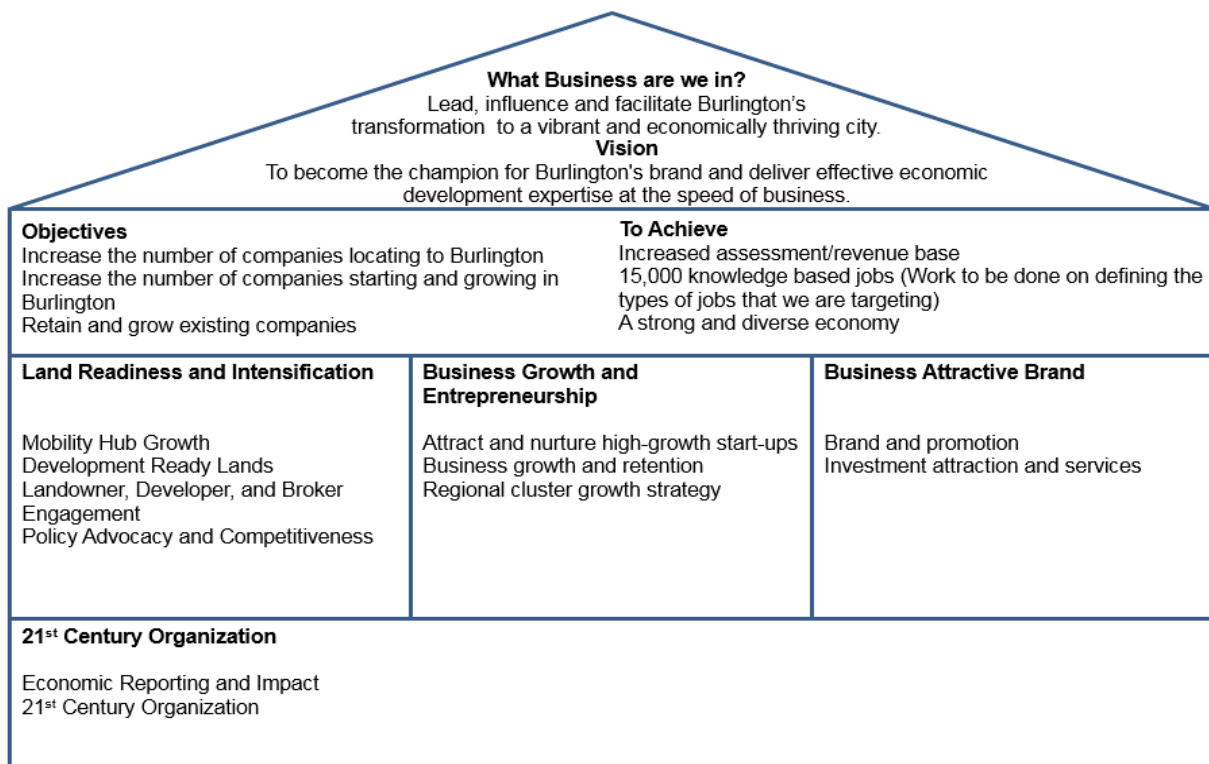
1. Land Readiness and Intensification
2. Business Growth & Entrepreneurship
3. A Business Attractive Brand
4. A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organization

The key deliverables for Burlington Economic Development’s Strategic Plan are:

- 15,000 new knowledge-based jobs to Burlington by 2040,
- An increase in the City of Burlington’s ICI Assessment Base by \$500 million over five years, and
- A strong and diverse regional economy as measured by our economic indicators.

Burlington Economic Development’s full Strategic Plan can be found [here](#).

A summary of Burlington Economic Development’s Strategic Plan is found in the following Strategic House:



In 2019, Mayor Marianne Meed Ward announced a new initiative being launched from the Mayor’s Office in partnership with Councillor Kelvin Galbraith: The Red Tape Red Carpet Task Force. The initiative’s goal: identify and eliminate barriers to growth and new business attraction in Burlington so that new and existing businesses can locate here, expand and thrive. Through an initial public town hall session, subsequent focus groups, an online survey, and a series of 1:1 meetings, a wealth of valuable feedback, insights and ideas were collected from hundreds of local business owners, city partners and staff. A smaller Task Force of internal and external leaders reviewed the findings and compiled a list of 22 actionable [recommendations](#) that were approved by Council in September 2019. Burlington Economic Development is fully committed as both a lead

or delivery partner to supporting the implementation of these recommendations and making it easier to do business in Burlington.

These recommendations, while not currently integrated into the strategic plan, are fully implemented in the 2020 Performance Management Plan. Following the completion of the Governance Review and other key supporting policy framework plans, we will complete a 5-year check-in on Burlington's 10-year economic vision and 25-year strategic plan to understand key economic opportunities and challenges that Burlington is facing and redevelop the Burlington Economic Development Strategic Plan. Key recommendations on cutting the red tape and rolling out the red carpet which have been integrated into the 2020 Performance Management Plan are outlined on the next page.

### Cutting the Red Tape

Cutting Red Tape	RT1	Establish a position at City Hall to act as our Chief of Business Development, serving as a primary outreach for attracting new businesses to Burlington, overseeing and expediting applications through the system and reporting progress and obstacles regularly to City Council and the City Manager
Cutting Red Tape	RT2	Develop and implement targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including timelines for processing business applications, for all staff in planning, building & development teams
Cutting Red Tape	RT3	Streamline and optimize the zoning, site grading and Committee of Adjustment processes for faster execution and resolution, considering recommendations from industry professionals
Cutting Red Tape	RT4	Optimize the City of Burlington website with relevant, informative and easy-to-find content that is search-optimized and externally marketed in order to support businesses through their journey with us
Cutting Red Tape	RT5	Implement improved customer service technology including a self-serve online portal for applicants including the ability to submit and check on the status of their applications.
Cutting Red Tape	RT6	Explore additional paid "Fast Track" options for rush projects and business applications in areas in addition to the existing fast track for building permits, while also ensuring the delivery date results in a firm decision.
Cutting Red Tape	RT7	Foster a strong and meaningful culture of high performance and employee recognition
Cutting Red Tape	RT8	Review the agribusiness rules, zoning, and definitions to encourage diversified use and help support economic sustainability for our rural/farming businesses.
Cutting Red Tape	RT9	Establish a rural-point-of-contact person who can navigate agriculture requests (business or otherwise) with other agencies.
Cutting Red Tape	RT10	Target completion of all minor site plan reviews and zoning clearances within 30 days.
Cutting Red Tape	RT11	Implement an acceptable Standard Deviation for development related plans and drawings that better accounts for the use of imperial measurements (e.g. 0.00m or 3/16").

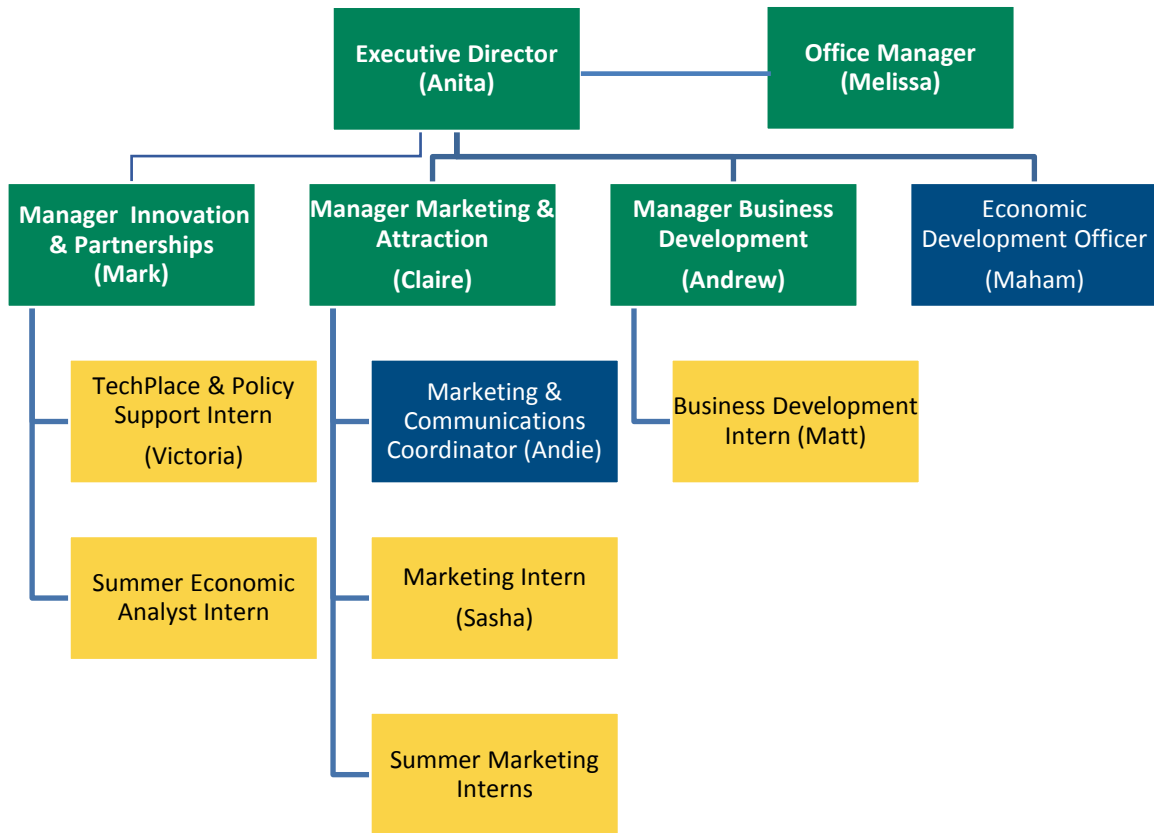
**Rolling Out the Red Carpet**

Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC12	Develop a clear vision and associated branding strategy at the City of Burlington with respect to business attraction and development.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC13	Mayor and leadership team act as Chief Salespeople, actively seeking out opportunities to bring new business to Burlington.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC14	Make business attraction/retention a standing item for discussion at all Planning & Development Committee meetings.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC15	Launch monthly Subject Matter Expert (SME) drop-in sessions where businesses can come ask questions and get advice and guidance from experts from the City of Burlington and partner organizations.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC16	Create an “Open for Business” customer service window, ideally on the first floor of City Hall, co-locating key staff from different business-related departments for easy public access and on-the-spot collaboration & problem solving.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC17	Review the efficiency, effectiveness and optimal structure of the Burlington Economic Development Corporation and TechPlace, as well as the opportunity for a Municipal Development Corporation, in achieving the city’s business attraction and retention goals (see companion report listed on July 8, 2019 COW agenda: M0-04-19).
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC18	City Manager to review and implement changes to the City’s organizational structure and business processes to give priority strategic focus to enhanced economic and business development working closely with the BEDC.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC19	Explore opportunities to use city parking supply as a leverage for business attraction and address existing downtown parking challenges.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC20	Consider the establishment of a venture capital fund to support business attraction (use Innisfil Accelerates as an example/model – <a href="http://innisfilaccelerates.ca">innisfilaccelerates.ca</a> ).
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC21	Continue municipal advocacy by the Mayor and senior leaders at the City of Burlington with other levels of government and partner agencies to speed up their approvals as part of the overall development process.
Rolling out the Red Carpet	RC22	Develop a Brownfield Community Improvement Plan for the City of Burlington with said plan to include redevelopment goals, specific targets, actions, and an implementation and monitoring strategy.

**Burlington Economic Development’s Budget and Resource Allocation**

The city’s 2020 contribution to the Burlington Economic Development is \$1,391,990. We currently have 10.0 FTE and 3 summer interns that will be recruited for 2020 which will be dedicated to developing our business brand and a strong marketing strategy that attracts business to Burlington. Business attraction, branding, marketing and communications will continue to become a greater focus for Burlington Economic Development in 2020 with a focus on the development of the One Burlington Brand.

Our current Organizational Structure in 2020 is:



Our current and planned utilization of resources are as follows:

	2019 % Total Resources	2020 % Total Resources
Pillar 1: Land Readiness and Intensification (Pending MDC consideration)	25%	9%
Pillar 2: Business Growth and Entrepreneurship	21%	24%
Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	37%	44%
Pillar 4: 21st Century Organization	18%	22%
Total	100%	100%

\*numbers are slightly off due to rounding.

Burlington Economic Development has developed a 2018-2022 Strategic Plan that outlines our role and major deliverables to the community. Annually, based on input that we receive from our stakeholders, Burlington Economic Development modifies our



tactics to ensure that we are utilizing our resources to achieve the best results. The 2020-2022 primary deliverables and timing of deliverables is as follows:

**2020 – 2022 Projects and Timing**

Projects and Timing		2020		2021		2022
		Q1-2	Q3-4	Q1-2	Q3-4	
<b>Pillar 1: Land Readiness &amp; Intensification</b>						
1.1	Community Improvement Plan					
1.2	Municipal Development Corporation (MDC)					
1.3	Landowner, Developer, and Broker Engagement					
1.4	MTO Block Planning					
1.5	Policy Advocacy and Competitiveness					
1.6	Zoning by law Comprehensive Review					
1.7	Support the Activation of Key Parcels of Land					
1.7.1	1200 King					
1.7.2	Bronte Meadows Vision and Activation					
1.7.3	King Paving and Mercedes Benz					
<b>Pillar 2: Business Growth and Entrepreneurship</b>						
2.1	Business Model (TechPlace)					
2.2	TechPlace Business Attraction, Innovation Partnerships, and Network Building					
2.2.1	TechPlace profile to attract and nurture high-growth start-ups					
2.2.2	Start-up and Soft Landing Promotion (TechPlace)					
2.2.3	Scale-up and Admin (TechPlace)					
2.2.4	TechPlace Marketing					
2.3	Business Retention and Expansion Strategy Redesign					
2.3.1	Corporate Care/ Corporate Calls					
2.3.2	Business Immigration Support					
2.3.3	BR&E Sector Strategy focused on established industries					
2.3.4	Transit Connectivity - Hamilton and Burlington					
2.4	Retail Strategy & Transition Plan					
2.5	Talent Attraction & Retention Strategy					
2.6	City Innovation Support					
<b>Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand</b>						
3.1	One Brand Development and Implementation					
3.2	GO Corridor Vision and Implementation					
3.3	Business Attraction Strategy and Action Plan					
3.3.1	TechPlace Startup Attraction					
3.4	Post-Secondary Strategy and Implementation					
3.5	Downtown Strategy and Action Plan					
3.6	Leveraging Sister Cities for economic growth					
3.7	Burlington Ambassador Program					
3.8	Marketing and Promotion					
3.9	Filming & Digital Media Strategy					
3.10	CCIW Development as a Centre of Excellence					
<b>Enabler: 21st Century Organization</b>						
4.1	Burlington Economic Development Governance review					
4.2	Integrated Customer Service Experience					
4.2.1	Integrated Customer Service Experience					
4.3	Economic Insights and Communications					
4.3.1	2015 -2025 Economic Vision & Strategic Plan Check In & Review					
4.3.2	Coordinated advocacy and support from City Government Relations on Economic Opportunities and addressing barriers to economic prosperity					
4.4	Staff Retention and Development					
4.4.1	Assess staff skillsets to determine we have the "right mix"					
4.5	Forward Looking Organization (Tech Forward)					
4.6	Office Management & Administrative Support					
4.7	Financial Management and Reporting					
4.8	Council Engagement & Communications					

## 2020 Primary Deliverables Dashboard Summary

Primary Deliverables 2019					
Strategic Pillar	Strategic Pillar Objective	Key Project Number	Key Project Name	Key Deliverable	Traffic Light Status
Pillar 1: Land Readiness and Intensification	Unlock key areas of land and key developments to create value for Burlington's economy.	1.1	Community Improvement Plan	Approval by Council of a Brownfield CIP Development of a long term workplan for sequencing of comprehensive CIP Strategy for Burlington.	Not Started
Pillar 1: Land Readiness and Intensification	Unlock key areas of land and key developments to create value for Burlington's economy.	1.2	Municipal Development Corporation (MDC)	Champion and support the development of an MDC for Burlington.	Not Started
Pillar 2: Business Growth and Entrepreneurship/Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	Develop TechPlace's programming and services	2.1	Business Model (TechPlace)	Future business model of TechPlace established in conjunction with Governance Review repositioning the day-to-day management of TechPlace through a partnership model.	Not Started
Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	Attract & Retain Business in Burlington	3.1	One Brand Development and Implementation	One Brand for Burlington developed in 2020 and launched in Q1 2021.	Not Started
Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	Attract & Retain Business in Burlington	3.2	GO Corridor Vision and Implementation	Completion of GO Corridor visioning and public engagement, with integration into long-term Area Secondary Planning and Implementation Planning jointly with Community Planning.	Not Started
Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	Attract & Retain Business in Burlington	3.3	Business Attraction Strategy and Action Plan	15 New Companies Attracted to Burlington 18 New Companies to the Regional Economy 50 Leads Serviced 80 Leads Generated IA Network and Lead NPS or 40 or greater 400,000 sq.ft. leased	Not Started
Pillar 3: Business Attractive Brand	Attract & Retain Business in Burlington	3.4	Post-Secondary Strategy and Implementation	Continued support for attraction of post-secondary institutions to Burlington.	Not Started
Pillar 4: 21st Century Organization	Position the organization for success	4.1	Burlington Economic Development Governance review	Support the review of Burlington Economic Development and implement recommendations to position Burlington for economic prosperity.	Not Started
Pillar 4: 21st Century Organization	Position the organization for success	4.2	Integrated Customer Service Experience	- Streamlined customer service process implemented in conjunction with the City of Burlington - Key files assisted through the development process within city hall - 50 NPS - 85 % Customers would recommend	Not Started

### Key Strategic Organizational Shifts for the 2020 Plan

During 2019, we began to make a strategic shift from a focus on policy and land development to proactive marketing and business attraction. This will continue in 2020 with Burlington Economic Development leading the One Brand for Burlington and the

continued evolution of our Marketing Strategy in support of our business attraction goals.

The recommendations of the Red Tape Red Carpet Taskforce have been fully integrated into the 2020 Plan in several key areas including shifting deliverables for the downtown vision, coordinated marketing & communications, new advocacy approaches, integrated customer service and the governance review, and reconsideration of an MDC.

- **Downtown Vision & Action Plan:** In coordination with the Burlington Downtown Business Association (BDBA) and the City of Burlington, we anticipate beginning work on the renewed core commitment in 2021. A recommendation of the Red Tape Red Carpet Taskforce was to explore leveraging parking for business attraction in the downtown. A committee has been formed and the initial direction from the committee was to look more broadly at the economic factors influencing business attraction to the downtown and this will be integrated into work on the Downtown Vision and Action Plan.
- **Branding, Marketing & Communications:** The initial plans in 2019 to develop a business brand are now fully solidified into the One Brand for Burlington which Burlington Economic Development will lead in partnership with the City of Burlington and Tourism Burlington. We will continue our shift to building out stronger marketing and communications to tell Burlington's story and work in partnership with corporate communications at the City of Burlington to update all communication assets and take a coordinated approach to business attraction and retention.
- **New Advocacy Approaches:** We will continue to advocate for key business support policies at the local, regional, provincial, and federal levels strengthening our partnerships with the City of Burlington to provide united and coordinated advocacy to other levels of government building on the success already built in relations with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO).
- **Integrated Customer Service:** Delivering a first-class customer service experience for businesses locating and expanding in Burlington will continue to be a key differentiator and core value proposition for Burlington Economic Development. With organizational changes at the City of Burlington to create an internal business concierge role through the Customer Experience Manager – Business Development efforts will be focused on creating an integrated Customer Service Experience for businesses. We expect support and development of the new experience to continue to use significant resources into Q4 as we develop coordinated customer service standards, processes, tracking, and reporting.

- **Governance Review & MDC:** Creating a governance structure that supports business attraction and retention will be supported by consultants MDB Insights with recommendations to be made in Q2. This work will be integrated with the reconsideration of a Municipal Development Corporation and the best tools to activate land for economic development and city-building outcomes. A fundamental element of this work will be the review of Burlington's Economic Development strategy including the support of start-ups and scale-ups through TechPlace. Recommendations from this work will be fully integrated into the strategy and performance management activities for the balance of the year 2020 and beyond to deliver on recommendations.

Due to a large number of key deliverables and potentially shifting priorities during 2020 we have included several items as farm team activities. These include the following activities which may commence in 2020 if resources are available but are likely to be delivered in 2021 if capacity is not available to undertake the activities with shifting priorities and demands:

- Film and Creative Media Strategy
- Activation of the CCIW
- Retail Strategy and Transition Plan
- Downtown Vision and Action Plan
- Talent Attraction and Retention Strategy
- City Innovation Support and Test Ecosystem

### **Burlington Economic Development's 2020 Priorities**

During 2019, we began to make a strategic shift from a focus on policy and land development to proactive marketing and business attraction. This will continue in 2020 with Burlington Economic Development leading the One Brand for Burlington and the continued evolution of our Marketing Strategy in support of our investment attraction goals. Outlined below are draft key projects and deliverables for 2020 that will be achieved through our Performance Management Plan.

### **Land Readiness & Intensification**

- **Community Improvement Plan (CIP)** – Approval by Council of a Brownfield CIP and development of a long-term work plan for sequencing of comprehensive CIP Strategy for Burlington.
- **Municipal Development Corporation (MDC)** – Champion and support the development of an MDC for Burlington.

### **Business Growth & Entrepreneurship**

- TechPlace Business Model – Future business model of TechPlace established in conjunction with Governance Review repositioning the day-to-day management of TechPlace through a partnership model.

### **Business Attractive Brand**

- One Brand – One Brand for Burlington developed in 2020 and launched in Q1 2021.
- Investment Attraction – Continued focus on key priority investment sectors and building Burlington’s marketing strategy, infrastructure, assets, and policies to attract companies in:
  - Clean Tech – Water & Wastewater Technology
  - Biomedical & Life Sciences – Cannabis HQ and R&D
  - Creative Industries & Film
- GO Corridor Vision and Master Planning – Completion of GO Corridor visioning and public engagement, with integration into long-term Area Secondary Planning and Implementation Planning jointly with Community Planning.
- Institutional Attraction - Continued support for the attraction of post-secondary institutions to Burlington.

### **21st Century Organization**

- Governance Review – Support the review of Burlington Economic Development and implement recommendations to position Burlington for economic prosperity.
- Integrated Customer Service Experience - Support the implementation of a streamlined customer service process implemented in conjunction with the City of Burlington.

### **Emerging Opportunities and Priorities**

The above noted priorities are subject to change based on opportunities that may arise during the year related to business expansion and retention. Two emerging opportunities are detailed in the confidential appendices A and B.

---

## **Financial Matters:**

Burlington Economic Development will receive a city contribution of \$1,391,990 in 2020. The 2020 Performance Management Plan will be implemented utilizing this budget.

---

## **Climate Implications**

The implementation of Burlington Economic Development's 2020 Performance Management Plan has the following climate implications:

- Through the approval and implementation of a Brownfield Community Improvement Plan, contaminated sites will be made ready for future uses.
  - As part of the Business Attraction Strategy and Action Plan, Burlington Economic Development will seek to attract two new Cleantech companies per year. These companies will provide solutions to climate and environmental issues.
  - The GO Corridor Vision and Master Planning will encourage increased employment density to take cars off roads.
  - Burlington Economic Development's advocacy for business support policies often have positive climate implications. For example, advocacy for increased service along the GO lines and increased Burlington to Hamilton bus service reduces vehicle emissions.
- 

## **Engagement Matters:**

The contents of this report have been received and approved by Burlington Economic Development's Board of Directors.

---

## **Other Considerations:**

The key deliverables of our 2020 Performance Management Plan are dependent on the approval of Burlington's Official Plan and Regional approval of the Official Plan including the Mobility Hubs.

The key deliverables are also dependent on revised 2041 Best Planning Estimates for Burlington with an increase in employment numbers.

---

**Conclusion:**

Thank you for receiving Burlington Economic Development's Strategic Planning Overview and 2020 Performance Management Plan and providing us with the opportunity to present a more detailed version of the Plan. We look forward to the discussion.

---

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Steffler  
Manager, Innovation and Partnerships  
Burlington Economic Development Corporation  
289-337-5505 ext. 102

**Appendices:**

- A. Confidential Appendix on Post-Secondary Opportunity
- B. Confidential Appendix on Real Estate Opportunity

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Council. Final approval is by the City Manager.