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**To:** Chair and Members of the Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability Committee

**From:** Councillor Lisa Kearns, Ward 2

**Cc:** Kevin Arjoon, City Clerk  
Tim Commisso, City Manager

**Date:** June 25, 2020

**Re:** Establishment of a Lobbyist Registry as an Accountability and Transparency Tool

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## **Motion:**

Direct the City Clerk to bring forward a staff report to implement a Lobbyist Registry for the City of Burlington, in accordance with the *Municipal Act* section 223.9.

## **Background:**

In 2006 the Municipal Act was amended to include provisions aimed at addressing the issue of greater accountability in municipal government. The amendments included provision for the establishment of a Lobbyist Registry.

The Province's Office of the Integrity Commissioner includes a Lobbyist Registry however this Registry does not extend to municipalities.

In 2012 Council considered a Lobbyist Registry by way of Report CL-11-12 which recommended that the City of Burlington not support the establishment of a Lobbyist Registry at either the municipal or regional level, however the City was not strongly opposed to the idea.

In 2018, The city of Burlington Council Code of Good Governance was established and approved by Council. The Code of Good Governance is designed to achieve excellence in governance and promote public trust and confidence in Council and the City (Burlington's Strategic Plan 2015-2040, An Engaging City: 4.1 Good Governance).

In December 2018, I met with Andrea Holland, Acting City Clerk, to discuss the implementation of a city-wide Lobbyist Registry. At that time, it was agreeable that, to expedite, only a Ward 2 'Business Registry' be created with a city Lobbyist Registry to follow. The Ward 2 Business Registry has been in place since March 1, 2019 and has received positive feedback.

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In March 2019, my Councillor's office held a meeting with Angela Morgan, City Clerk to request the financial and human resource requirements for the implementation of a Lobbyist Registry for consideration by Committee.

The City of Hamilton, Toronto, Vaughn, Brampton, Ottawa and Montreal all have some form of a Lobbyist Registry. The City of Burlington is considered a Large Urban Municipality of over 100,000 population and is considered the Best Place to Live in Canada.

The city's website states that the role of the Mayor and Councillors includes to "ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality". Significant concerns from the public about development pressures (as quantified at the February 13, 2020 Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability Committee Meeting, Item 4.2 - 2019 Community Survey Results, Report CC-01-20, Appendix B) have presented an opportunity for increased transparency about Council interactions with the development community and beyond. Whereas observed growth pressures have increased interest in Burlington by the development community and other parties that would benefit from decisions of Council. Examples may include but are not limited to downtown growth, Nelson Quarry and Millcroft Greens, whereby the constituents' sense of trust and transparency could be improved through an established Lobbyist Registry.

A Lobbyist Registry can ensure that interactions between staff, elected officials and lobbyists are a matter of public record and accessible to all citizens. Generally, identified lobbyists are required to provide information about the organization for which they work, the individuals or departments / agencies they are lobbying, and the outcomes they are seeking to achieve. The establishment of a Lobbyist Registry is a tool to ensure greater integrity, accountability and transparency.