

Business Retention & Expansion Strategy Covid-19 Update

Overview

With the outbreak of Covid-19 across the world, we have been focusing our efforts to mitigate these effects through a revised BR&E strategy that will be developed as the crisis unfolds. However, due to the isolation required during the pandemic lockdown, we have changed how some of our programs are managed.

In addition, many of our service delivery partners have also altered their offerings and processes in-order to respond to the crisis. This has directly impacted what we are able to provide, and how we are integrated into the fabric of the business community.

Burlington Economic Development will continue working tirelessly to change our ways of doing business in order to respond effectively to the crisis and assist our employers. We will be employing numerous new technologies, ways of doing business, and leading the change that is required within our market to ensure our City's success well into the future.

Technologies being Utilized

1. Salesforce (altered to fit Covid-19 requirements)
2. Zoom- Conference Calls
3. Zoom- Professional
4. Microsoft Teams
5. Cellular Phones
6. Microsoft OneDrive
7. CoStar
8. Realtrack

Corporate Calling

Team Burlington & Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN)

Team Burlington and the Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN) will be integral to the business engagement and corporate calling strategy for 2020 as the City of Burlington continues to mitigate the problems caused by COVID-19 moving forward. As each of the member organizations within BERN has a different cluster focus, we are working cooperatively to engage businesses in our focus sectors.

General Corporate Calling

We will be continuing our traditional Corporate Calling program that we will be instituting in-line with research that has been undertaken as to the outcomes and threats posed by the pandemic. The Corporate Calling Program may shift to include new sectors and there will be a new set of questions developed in-line with the new services being offered by our external partners. We will also be asking questions to further develop our data regarding the problems being faced by Burlington businesses.

None of our metrics for Corporate Calling will change in 2020, and we will still engage with a minimum of 50 employers throughout the year to ensure that our primary employment base is heard and assisted throughout this crisis.

Customer Service Requests (CSRs)

Our customer service requests will continue as normal with all of our pre-existing service offerings being continued throughout this change in the global economy. These offerings will however be grown to ensure better responsiveness to the Covid-19 Crisis. These service offerings are to be expanded upon in-line with the expanded service offerings of our partners. Some of these new programs include the BCAP program, the wage subsidy, and various liquidity programs that are being provided by the Federal and Provincial governments to help with our economic recovery. In particular, we feel that the following types of CSRs will expand in scope:

- Hiring
- Financing
- Subsidies
- Taxes
- Regulations

All of our CSRs will continue to be tracked in Salesforce and a specialized click box for Covid-19 related inquiries will be added to the primary object to ensure that our tracking can accurately determine trends caused by the pandemic.

Development Facilitation

We will be adapting development facilitation to the new digital submissions process. When the process is rolled out we will be continuing the evolution of the integrated customer service experience with the City of Burlington. This will include developing educational materials and outreach to companies as part of a proactive customer approach to development facilitation.

Data & Research

We are also working to better understand the overall impacts, now and into the future, for COVID-19. We have already completed two impact analysis' for the crisis, and are in the process of further expanding the data. We will be developing further data, and utilizing our expanded data sources, to ensure that we have up to date information. Our expanded data strategy, and the data we collect through our BR&E process will feed into our responses and expanded program offering.

Advocacy & Representation

City Engagement

Throughout the crisis, we have and will continue to maintain our relationships with internal staff and members of council to ensure that the voice of the business community is heard and addressed. We

have already been advocating on numerous issues such as: by-law changes, MDC creation, post secondary attraction, and the overall response to COVID-19. This will not change moving into the later parts of 2020, but instead increase in intensity as we get a better handle on the concerns of our business community.

External Engagement

There are two levels to our external engagement and advocacy with our peers and partners. The first being the interconnectedness with our immediate partners within our sphere of influence. This includes organizations like BDC, EDC, the Centre for Skills Development and Training, our financial institutions, and the Ministries. This engagement will be done to further develop our service offering to assist companies throughout this crisis.

On another level, we will be engaging with Ministers and other higher levels of government as over the past several weeks BEDC have been tasked with leading the recovery of the Greater Toronto Area as the advocacy lead for the GTA Economic Development Alliance. This gives us a forum to elevate our voices to the highest levels of government, and to find a way to ensure that all of the industries that we, and the other municipalities across the GTA represent are heard at higher levels of government.

BERN- Sub Sector Sessions

As a component of BERN's mandate, individual events for 10 of Burlington's sub-sector will be held with business leaders in these sectors. We will be focusing on the following clusters: Professional and Technical Services, Personal Services and Healthcare Businesses, Real Estate and Land Development, Manufacturers and Large Employers, Culture Sport and Creative Industries, Retail, Hospitality, Entrepreneurship Startups and Scale-ups, Life Sciences, and Agriculture Related Businesses.