

## Motion Memorandum

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**SUBJECT:** Eligibility Criteria for Membership on Standing Committees of Council

**TO:** Committee of the Whole

**From:** Councillor Lisa Kearns

Date to Committee: April 13, 2026

Date to Council: April 21, 2026

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### **Motion for Council to Consider:**

Direct the City Clerk to review or establish eligibility restrictions which may result in a by-law amendment recommendation for membership on any Standing Committee of Council where a member of committee is a registered lobbyist under the Municipal Act, 2001 and the City of Burlington's Lobbyist Registry By-law 47-2003, and where the subject matter of that lobbying activity materially aligns with the mandate of the committee; and report back with potential amendments by Q3 2026.

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### **Reason:**

Standing Committees of Council in Burlington are established through Council's Procedure By-law and operate under defined Terms of Reference. These Committees review policy matters, development applications, financial issues, and strategic initiatives before making recommendations to Council.

Burlington's Lobbyist Registry was created to increase public visibility into who is attempting to influence municipal decisions. Allowing a registered lobbyist to sit on a committee overseeing the same subject matter risks undermining that transparency objective.

Where a Member of Committee is also registered as a lobbyist on matters that substantially align with a Committee's mandate (e.g., planning and development matters before a Planning & Development Committee), a heightened risk of perceived or actual conflict may arise. While such circumstances may not automatically constitute a pecuniary conflict under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, they may create:

- Perceived bias in agenda-setting or deliberation
- Undue influence in agenda-setting
- Unequal access to information

- Erosion of public trust in committee neutrality

This motion does not alter statutory obligations under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, but establishes an internal governance safeguard consistent with Burlington's ethical framework.

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**Outcome Sought:**

Review of the eligibility restrictions for members of a Standing Committee of Council and propose options to enhance municipal governance.

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**Implications:**

No significant financial impact is anticipated beyond routine administrative and legal drafting costs.

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**References:**

City of Burlington By-law 47-2023, a by-law to establish and maintain a lobbyist registry. (CL-03-23)

Audit Committee Terms of Reference – Appendix B to CL-13-24

Pipeline to Permit Committee Terms of Reference – Appendix A CM-15-23

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**Strategic Alignment**

- Designing and delivering complete communities
  - Providing the best services and experiences
  - Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
  - Driving organizational performance
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Approved as per form by the City Clerk