



April 9, 2026

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward and Members of Burlington City Council
City of Burlington
426 Brant Street
Burlington, ON L7R 3Z6

Subject: Burlington Chamber of Commerce Position on City Staff Recommendation Regarding
Burlington Economic Development and Tourism

Dear Mayor Meed Ward and Members of Council,

On behalf of the Burlington Chamber of Commerce and our membership, I am writing to express our position in support of the recommendation not to dissolve Burlington Economic Development and Tourism, and for the organization to remain an independent, third-party entity rather than being brought under the City's corporate structure.

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce did not support dissolving Burlington Economic Development and Tourism. We strongly believe that Burlington's Economic Development and Tourism functions most effectively as an independent, third-party organization, rather than as a department within municipal government.

Since Tourism Burlington joined Burlington Economic Development, the department has evolved into one of the best-in-class tourism organizations in the province, providing exceptional value and results for the community. The Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) has been managed efficiently under this model, and the majority—if not all—of the hotel funders have expressed satisfaction with how marketing funds are being used to promote Burlington as a tourism destination.

We also wish to note that while the Burlington Chamber of Commerce intends to remain an active participant in Burlington's business ecosystem and ongoing collaboration with Burlington Economic Development and Tourism and city staff, we believe our perspective would have provided valuable insight into the effectiveness of the current structure and the importance of maintaining it.

As an independent organization, Burlington Economic Development and Tourism has demonstrated the ability to collaborate effectively with key community stakeholders, such as the Burlington Chamber of Commerce and many local businesses. A strong example of this collaboration along with city staff to engage all businesses to leverage World Cup opportunities.

Burlington Economic Development and Tourism also plays a vital role as one of the four independent members of Team Burlington, alongside the Burlington Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Burlington BIA, and the Aldershot BIA. Team Burlington was instrumental during the COVID-19



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pandemic, providing critical support, unified communication, and up-to-date information to help the business community navigate unprecedented challenges. More recently, this partnership has continued to deliver value by supporting businesses affected by current tariff challenges and ensuring timely communication and coordinated advocacy.

Additionally, the Chamber again wishes to clarify that there is no duplication of information between the Burlington Chamber of Commerce and Burlington Economic Development and Tourism. In fact, our two organizations complement each other's work—our respective websites link to one another and provide distinct yet equally important information for Burlington businesses. This collaboration ensures the business community receives comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date guidance on complex economic issues.

The Chamber commends Council for the decision to not bring Economic Development and Tourism under the City's corporate umbrella—as doing so would have eroded the independence, agility, and business-centered collaboration that have been key to Burlington's economic success—and for reviewing this file, engaging the business community, including the Burlington Chamber of Commerce, and concluding that economic development and tourism should remain at arm's-length governance from the City of Burlington. Maintaining the current model allows for greater responsiveness, stronger engagement with the private sector, and a continued focus on driving investment and growth in our community.

Thank you for your attention and leadership on this important matter. We appreciate your continued commitment to Burlington's economic prosperity and stand ready to work collaboratively toward our shared goal of a thriving, competitive, and sustainable local economy.

Sincerely,



Terry Caddo
President and CEO
Burlington Chamber of Commerce



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