

# Economic Development & Tourism Service Delivery

*Considering the future of how Burlington delivers economic development and tourism services*

# Why This Decision Is Before Council

## **Staff Direction Received via CAO-06-25**

Report back on two options for consideration:

- Fully detailed options for integrated economic development and tourism functions within the municipal organizational structure
- A draft Service Agreement that retains an independent entity while permitted a collaborative decision-making relationship with Council

# Foundational to Decision Making

## **Statutory authority**

The City holds the statutory authority for the delivery of economic development and tourism services under the Municipal Act 2001.

# The Two Options Before Council

## Option A · Recommended

### A New Service Agreement

Continue with an external organization to deliver economic development and tourism services — with a clear, more accountable agreement — while the City of Burlington develops its economic development strategy in partnership with BEDT.

*Strategy first — then the right structure will follow.*

## Option B · Alternative

### Transition to In-House

Bring economic development and tourism services inside the City as a new division or department. Staff have developed a transition plan and are prepared to execute this path if Council directs.

*The transition plan is ready. The question is whether it is the right time.*

# The Case for Option A: Strategy Before Structure

Moving in-house today would replicate services we already offer, albeit at a reduced cost, but without a clear sense of purpose or direction.

**1** Without a strategy, we would be creating an in-house model based on like for like service - not purpose would follow

**2** In-house now would create roles certainty and create a cost efficiency, but would lack a clear connection to vision

**3** The strategy will tell us if — and what — in-house looks like

# The In-House Work Has Been Done

If Council wishes to proceed with Option B, staff are ready. A transition plan has been developed and can be activated.

## What the Transition Plan Covers

# What Might a Service Agreement look like?

*Option A does not mean the status quo. The new agreement will close the accountability gaps that have existed.*

**Outcome-Based Targets Tied to Horizon 2050**

**A Cadence of Reporting to City**

**Defined Role Clarity**

**Addresses Corporate Service Risks**

**Formal Evaluation Clause**

# What Happens Next

*If Council approves the staff recommendation (Option A), the following steps will follow:*



# Proceed with a Service Agreement. Build the Strategy. Decide on Structure in the future with Confidence.

## Option A is recommended

Continue with the external organization through a new service agreement that delivers accountability and a community economic development strategy (with the City as the lead)

## Option B is ready

Staff have developed a full transition plan for an in-house model.

## Either way, clarity comes first

A future focused, community-wide economic development strategy will give Burlington — and Council — the foundation to make the right long-term decision on service delivery.