



December 7, 2009

Mayor Cam Jackson
Members of City Council
City of Burlington

**Re: Budget and Strategic Planning Committee – December 8, 2009
Municipal Contribution to Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital**

Dear Sirs and Madam:

The Burlington Economic Development Corporation and Chamber of Commerce are writing today to express the business community's support for investing in the rehabilitation and expansion of Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital. We would also like to identify a number of issues and opportunities that should be addressed as the City of Burlington develops its contribution agreement and memorandum of understanding with the hospital.

Both of our organizations have met with hospital officials to review and discuss their proposal, consulted with our business peers and have reviewed the City staff report. Our joint comments are noted below.

Burlington needs a high quality hospital to be a complete community. The business community recognizes the critical role that a high performance hospital plays in creating and sustaining the enviable quality of life that Burlington residents enjoy. The role of health care in the community is highlighted by last year's MoneySense Magazine's ranking of the best places to live in Canada. Three of their twelve "lifestyle" measures focused on health care including the presence of a hospital, the number of doctors per one thousand residents and the percentage of health care workers within the population.

We believe the rehabilitation and expansion of the hospital would be a strategic investment toward improving the measures noted above and thus further enhancing the City's quality of life. It should be noted that Chamber of Commerce polls have consistently ranked health care as one of the business community's highest priorities.

Improvements to the hospital and its image would also help sustain the City's economic competitiveness. BEDC's investment attraction strategy has found that health care

facilities are a necessary component for a community to be able to win new business investment. Access to a top-notch hospital and health care is also an important factor in a company's ability to recruit and retain a high quality work force. Talent is the primary factor influencing a firm's decision to stay or locate in a municipality. If you don't have the right people, you don't have a business. A community's ability to access the right talent at the right time will give it the competitive advantage it needs to support the growth of its existing economic base and attract new investment, firms and jobs.

While there is a need for a high performing hospital, the level of municipal investment that the Joseph Brant is requesting requires a careful and thorough evaluation. The City is being asked to become a major partner in the expansion project. We believe that an investment of this magnitude is more than just a simple funding arrangement. Such an investment by the city suggests that the City should be actively involved in the development of the expansion plans, in identifying and implementing options for its funding, and ensuring that our common goals for a high quality facility and level of patient care are achieved.

BEDC and the Chamber feel that the City should address the following considerations as it develops its partnership with Joseph Brant and identifies the level and nature of the investment it will be making in the project. Consideration should be given to:

- Clearly identifying the type and range of services that will be offered at the hospital and how this relates to the scope, timing and cost of the project. What kind of hospital will Burlington get for its investment?
- Exploring a range of funding options in an effort to minimize the tax impact so as to maintain the City's competitive position and enhance opportunities for charitable giving.
- Establishing performance measures and benchmarks so that residents and businesses know that the level of care being offered at the hospital is among the best in Ontario.
- Actively engaging the public and business community by establishing on-going communications that are transparent and support the full disclosure of relevant information on the proposed hospital rehabilitation and expansion, its funding and implementation.
- Ensuring that the City has a role in the governance and accountability of the project and operations. Expanding the role of the City on the Hospital's Board should be considered.

- Creating a facility that is a leading example of environmental sustainability with respect to its design and use of resources and technologies.
- Making the hospital a centre for innovation and research with respect to teaching, clinical trials and technology commercialization.

Both BEDC and the Chamber are willing to work closely with the City and Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital to ensure that Burlington receives the type of facility and level of health care it needs. The comments above are respectfully submitted.

Yours truly,



Mark Gregory
Chair
BEDC



Francis Mackan
Chair
Burlington Chamber of Commerce