



Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN)
414 Locust Street
Burlington, Ontario
L7S 1T7

4.19

March 11, 2021

Prime Minister Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Premier Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Ford:

On March 3rd, 2021, City of Burlington Council passed the enclosed resolution calling for the Federal and Provincial governments to support the survival of restaurants and the hospitality industry.

The City of Burlington’s fundamental priority throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been to protect the health and safety of Burlington residents, employers and employees, and support our business community to survive the economic impacts of COVID-19 public health measures.

The members of Team Burlington (Burlington Economic Development, Burlington Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Burlington, Burlington Downtown Business Association and Aldershot Village BIA) came together to create the Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN) to engage our business community and ensure they are receiving the support they need during this challenging time. The City of Burlington is an integral part of BERN including members of senior management, the Mayor, and Ward 1 Councillor Kelvin Galbraith who brings his perspective as a business owner in Burlington. From the beginning of the pandemic, BERN has recognized that both the impacts and recovery from the necessary health measures to address the pandemic would vary greatly by economic sector.

The hospitality industry, including restaurants, has been one the sectors suffering the greatest negative impacts due to COVID-19 and will face the most significant barriers for businesses to survive the pandemic. According to the latest Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses

(CFIB) data, the hospitality industry will take 8+ years to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and businesses in this sector require specific short and long term supports to remain viable.

When the Province of Ontario went into lockdown and enforced a Stay-at-Home order on December 26, 2020, all restaurants across the province were forced to close to In Person dining for over 7 weeks with Halton and Burlington restaurants only able to open to In Person dining on February 16, 2021, under Red/Control Level Restrictions. The Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open placed Halton Region under the Red/Control level which restricts restaurants to a hard cap of 10 Dine In customers. The feedback from our business community continues to be that the hard cap does not make reopening their business viable for most restaurants. We would like to remind the Province of Ontario of the resolution calling for business equity that was passed by the City of Burlington on December 10, 2020, that asked that the province be requested to revise the physical distancing with capacity limits determined on a per square metre basis for persons admitted to *all* businesses, including restaurants, subject to consultation on Public Health best practices.

At the March 3rd Burlington City Council meeting the enclosed resolution was passed, in partnership with the Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN) and Team Burlington, calling on the Federal and Provincial governments to:

- Address the key fixed costs facing the restaurant industry while they face steep revenue declines including the following actions:
 - Expand small business relief measures including the *Small Business Relief Grant* and *Property Tax and Energy Cost Rebates* to the hardest hit sectors, including restaurants, beyond the period when they are placed under grey/lockdown level;
 - Provide wholesale pricing from the LCBO to restaurants to help increase margins on alcohol sales;
 - Investigate and potentially legislate for the significant increases that restaurants and other businesses have seen in insurance premiums (up to 30%) despite no significant changes to the risks that are being insured;
- Provide clear evidence and actions as to why restaurants need hard caps and closures when other consumer facing business types are able to remain open with caps based on building capacity;
- Provide supports and guidance to the restaurant industry and the public to increase consumer confidence and make it clear what is permitted/safe to do for residents and consumers to support the local restaurant industry while ensuring we stop the spread of COVID-19;
- Develop a long-term strategy of a minimum of three (3) and up to five+ (5+) years that outlines what recovery is expected to look like for the Hospitality industry and long-term supports of one+ (1+) years that will be available to the industry to support their long-term survival and recovery.

As we move through the pandemic, please know that the City of Burlington, Team Burlington and our local restaurant industry will continue to seek opportunities to work with you to help Burlington residents and businesses. We would welcome clearer guidance on how to create a safe dining environment, including clear rules and enforcement for patrons travelling between different COVID-19 zone levels under the reopening framework established by the Province of Ontario. The current system of recommendations and unclear guidelines places the onus on the restaurant community to interpret and enforce public health rules when it comes to protecting their staff and customers from the spread of COVID-19. With Burlington’s position surrounded by areas with higher cases that are in grey/lockdown zones, businesses are being forced to manage customers potentially travelling from these zones to dine in Burlington restaurants. Without clear public health rules and enforcement on travel between zones this places the liability and potential negative media firmly on our already struggling restaurants.

Thank you in advance. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Burlington Economic Recovery Network’s lead on this matter, Anita Cassidy, Executive Director, Burlington Economic Development, at Anita.Cassidy@burlington.ca or (905) 332-9415. It would be a pleasure to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Randall Smallbone
 Chair
 Burlington Economic
 Recovery Network

Marianne Meed Ward
 Mayor
 City of Burlington

CC:

- Federal Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages
- Federal Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade
- Provincial Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
- Provincial Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- Provincial Minister of Health
- Provincial Minister of Finance
- Minister Karina Gould
- MP Pam Damoff
- MP Adam Van Koeverden
- MPP Jane McKenna
- MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos
- MPP Parm Gill
- Halton Regional Council
- Members of the Towns of Milton, Halton Hills and Oakville Councils
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)



Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Ontario Big City Mayor's Caucus (OBCM)
Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO)
Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)
Milton Chamber of Commerce
Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce
Oakville Chamber of Commerce
Team Burlington (Burlington Economic Development, Burlington Chamber of
Commerce, Tourism Burlington, Burlington Downtown Business Association and
Aldershot Village BIA)
Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN)
Burlington Restaurant Association



March 10, 2021

SUBJECT: COVID-19 emergency response verbal update (CSSRA-05-21)

Please be advised that at its meeting held Wednesday, March 3, 2021, the Council of the City of Burlington approved the following resolution:

Whereas in May 2020 the City of Burlington and Team Burlington (Burlington Economic Development, Burlington Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Burlington, Burlington Downtown Business Association and the Aldershot Village BIA) formed the Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN). BERN has strategically brought together key stakeholders and business leaders from across Burlington to develop a robust local strategy that will prepare our economy for recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. On February 17, 2021, BERN and the City of Burlington engaged the Burlington restaurant community to discuss the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on their industry, current economic realities and ongoing support needed by restaurants to survive; and

Whereas when the Province of Ontario went into lockdown and enforced a stay-at-home order on December 26, 2020, all restaurants across the province were forced to close to in-person dining for over seven weeks and Halton and Burlington restaurants were only able to open to in-person dining on February 16, 2021, under red/control level restrictions; and

Whereas the Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open placed Halton Region under the red/control level which restricts restaurants to a hard cap of ten dine-in customers. The feedback from our business community continues to be that the hard cap does not make reopening their business viable for most restaurants. We would like to remind the Province of Ontario of the resolution calling for business equity that was passed by the City of Burlington on December 10, 2020, that asked that the province be requested to revise the physical distancing with capacity limits determined on a per square metre basis for persons admitted to all businesses, including restaurants, subject to consultation on public health best practices; and

Whereas restaurants and the hospitality sector continue to be one of the most impacted sectors by COVID-19 public health measures and according to the latest Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB) data, will take 8 plus years to recover from the impacts of COVID-19. The industry requires specific short and long term supports to remain viable.

Therefore, be it resolved that;

City Council, in partnership with BERN and Team Burlington, call on the federal and provincial governments to provide the following supports and address the issues identified by the Burlington restaurant community:

- Address the key fixed costs facing the restaurant industry while they face steep revenue declines including the following actions:

1. Expand small business relief measures including the Small Business Relief Grant and Property Tax and Energy Cost Rebates to the hardest hit sectors including restaurants beyond the period when they are placed under grey/lockdown level; and
 2. Provide wholesale pricing from the LCBO to restaurants to help increase margins on alcohol sales; and
 3. Investigate and potentially legislate for the significant increases that restaurants and other businesses have seen (up to 30%) in insurance premiums despite no significant changes to the risks that are being insured; and
- Provide clear evidence and actions as to why restaurants need hard caps and closures when other consumer facing business types are able to remain open with caps based on building capacity; and
 - Provide supports and guidance to the restaurant industry and the public to increase consumer confidence and make it clear what is permitted/safe to do for residents and consumers to support the local restaurant industry while ensuring we stop the spread of COVID-19; and
 - Develop a long-term strategy of a minimum of three (3) and up to five plus (5+) years that outlines what recovery is expected to look like for the hospitality industry and long-term supports of one plus (1+) years that will be available to the industry to support their long-term survival and recovery.

Further be it resolved that;

The Mayor and Council representative on BERN be directed to write a letter, jointly with BERN and Team Burlington, advocating for the actions outlined above to support the survival of restaurants and the hospitality industry to the Premier of Ontario and the Prime Minister of Canada; and

The City Clerk be directed to send a copy of the letter and resolution, once approved, to:

- Federal Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages
- Federal Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade
- Provincial Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
- Provincial Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- Provincial Minister of Health
- Provincial Minister of Finance
- Burlington Members of Parliament including Minister Karina Gould, MP Pam Damoff and MP Adam Van Koeverden

- Burlington Members of Provincial Parliament including MPP Jane McKenna, MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos and MPP Parm Gill
- Halton Regional Council
- Members of the Towns of Milton, Halton Hills and Oakville Councils
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
- Ontario Big City Mayor's Caucus (OBCM)
- Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO)
- GTHA Mayors and Chairs
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)
- Milton Chamber of Commerce
- Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce
- Oakville Chamber of Commerce
- Team Burlington (Burlington Economic Development, Burlington Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Burlington, Burlington Downtown Business Association and Aldershot Village BIA)
- Burlington Economic Recovery Network (BERN)
- Burlington Restaurant Association

If you have any questions, please contact me at extension 7702 or the e-mail address above.

Sincerely,



Kevin Arjoon
City Clerk