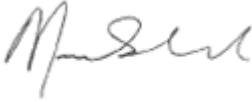




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

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|--------------------------|---|
| TO: | Mayor and Members City Council |
| DATE: | April 15, 2026 |
| SUBJECT: | 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan Production Updates |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | City Wide |
| SUBMITTED BY: | Norm Schleeahn Director, Economic Development Planning and Economic Development |
| SIGNATURE: |  |

The purpose of this Communication Update is to provide an overview respecting the production of the Economic Development Division's 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan.

Project Background

The Economic Development Division, in collaboration with the Tourism and Culture Division is producing a 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan. This Action Plan follows the completion of the 2021-2025 Economic Development Action Plan, which is anticipated to have its concluding annual update presented at the June 17, 2026, meeting of Hamilton City Council's General Issues Committee.

The consultative phase of the 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan's production was slated to begin in 2025. However, the immediate uncertainty created by rapid changes to the US-Canada trade relationship in 2025 necessitated a delay in the initiation of this project, and the initiation of unexpected tariff focused projects. Further

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details of these projects were outlined in City Staff's presentation of PED25221 Economic Development Action Plan 2024 Update. In summary, tariff focused work included Economic Development Staff supporting the delivery of three Mayor's Roundtables on Trade and Tariffs, creating a Tariff Hub on investinhamilton.ca, creating and delivering a Tariff Impact Questionnaire, undertaking multiple research projects to measure the risks and forecast impacts of tariffs on Hamilton's economy, and completing an application to the Government of Ontario's Trade-Impacted Communities Program.

In consideration of the upcoming municipal election and a change in leadership within the Economic Development Division, City Staff have prepared the following project plan to guide the completion of the 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan. This plan will ensure that the new 2026-2030 Hamilton City Council and the new Director of Economic Development will have sufficient time to provide input and feedback on the construction of the 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan.

Project Phasing and Timing

Phase 1 – Pre-Consultation and Consultation – Q1 2025 to Q2 2026

Extensive pre-consultative research and engagement undertaken in 2025 and early 2026 will support the creation of the 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan. These insights were secured through the aggregate findings of tariff-focused corporate calling from City Staff in the Economic Development Division's Business Investment and Sector Development Section, the findings of the 2025 Tariff Impact Questionnaire, sector-level insights gleaned through three Mayor's Roundtables on Trade and Tariffs, ad hoc consultations during meetings and presentations, and the findings of the 2025 and 2026 delivery of the Hamilton Business Survey.

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These findings will be harmonized with the results of an Engage Hamilton campaign that is expected to launch with a public poll in March 2026. This poll will be followed by an opportunity for residents to share qualitative visions of living and working in Hamilton, as well as a quantitative public-facing survey. Public consultations are expected to last into Phase 2 of this project to allow for public feedback on the priorities identified by Hamilton's business community.

Consultations with businesses and interested and affected parties in the broader economic development ecosystem will occur in early Q2 of 2026. These engagements will be facilitated through a third party, ensuring candour in the consultative process. While the third party is conducting these consultations, City Staff will expand their engagement efforts to include key City Staff, including members of the senior leadership team, and Members of Council.

The cumulative findings of these consultations will be presented as an information report at the General Issues Committee meeting of June 17, 2026.

Phase 2 – Report Draft – Q4 2026 to Q1 2027

A draft version of the 2026-2030 Plan will be produced by Economic Development Staff and presented to the post-election Council for information in Q4 of 2026 or early Q1 of 2027. This will ensure that the current Council and the post-election Council will be engaged in the production of the 2026-2030 Plan. It will also allow a new Director of Economic Development sufficient time to shape the ultimate vision and objectives of the 2026-2030 Action Plan.

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Phase 3 – Final Report – Q2 2027

A final draft is expected to be presented to Council with a recommendation to adopt in Q2 of 2027.

Contact

If you require any further information on this matter, or wish to discuss a potential engagement opportunity for City Staff to attend, please contact Adam Durrant, Senior Business Development Consultant, Economic Development Division, at (905) 546-2424 ext. 1781 or by email at adam.durrant@hamilton.ca

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A: 2026-2030 Economic Development Action Plan Production Timeline