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Novæ Res Urbis

GREATER TORONTO AREA EDITION

VOL 13 • No 18

WEDNESDAY • APRIL 28 • 2010

BURLINGTON BUSINESS

Mapping a new vision

Funding has flowed down the federal pipeline to help the **Burlington Economic Development Corporation** map new homes for the city's evolving manufacturing sector.

The corporation has received \$300,000 through the **Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario** (FedDev Ontario) to hire a consulting team to create design specifications for a range of advanced manufacturing facilities.

The city's existing inventory of industrial space will also be assessed against the potential models and opportunities for future development will be identified.

"Burlington's future economic prosperity depends on a healthy, vital and globally competitive manufacturing base," said Mayor **Cam Jackson**.

"We will work with our leading manufacturers to ensure that we have the supportive environment and infrastructure to create more long-term quality jobs."

The manufacturing sector generates \$2.3 billion, which is about 55 per cent of the city's industry revenues and employs about 15,000 workers. However, in the last year, more than 400 jobs were lost due to plant closures and operational consolidations.

According to the city's economic development corporation, the sector reports that the quality of manufacturing space and building stock available is a major impediment to the

growth and incubation of advanced manufacturing. The city has about 18-million square feet of industrial space and an 8 per cent vacancy rate, which may be skewed by the fact that some of the space is used for non-industrial purposes.

The study will primarily look at space needs for small- and medium-sized enterprises that are expanding and looking to build facilities. It will look at what is needed from the industry's perspective, while outlining design parameters for energy efficiency, waste reduction, green technology and more.

BURLINGTON'S FUTURE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY DEPENDS ON A HEALTHY, VITAL AND GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE MANUFACTURING BASE.

• Cam Jackson



The final report will include a building stock inventory for the city and a feasibility report with estimated costs to retrofit the buildings to the new design standards. The design standards will be shared with neighbouring municipalities and the inventory information will be made available to developers and manufacturers.

The project is expected to be completed by March 2011, with a request for proposals for a project consultant to be released in the coming weeks. **[NRU]**