

May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Dear Burlington Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services Committee: Regarding Report Number EICS-04-23 Better Homes Burlington Program Agenda Item 4.6**

Clean Air Partnership (CAP) is supportive of the City of Burlington's advancement of the Better Homes Burlington residential energy retrofit program. Advancing the residential retrofit market is critical to moving us towards the scale up needed to achieve the necessary science-based greenhouse gas reductions targets. CAP is pleased to see that Burlington is putting its verbal commitments to advance the residential retrofit market into action by providing Burlington residents with energy concierge support to help them navigate the complex retrofit process and available incentives. Many residential property owners do not have the experience and expertise they need to manage an energy efficiency retrofit. If they have a trusted general contractor with building science training who can help them navigate the process, then there is less need for the energy concierge services. **BUT** access to that expertise is an anomaly at this stage of the retrofit market. Hence the important role of municipalities to support their residents through energy concierge services. Providing energy concierge services is also extremely valuable for collating retrofit experiences, questions, challenges and possible solutions. This is critical market research information that can be used to better understand the resident retrofit experience and program improvements.

We are also pleased to see that Burlington is making progress addressing the financing challenge for those residents who would like to undertake energy efficiency retrofits. Limiting the loan amount to \$10,000 for air source heat pump installation may set significant limitations related to whole home retrofits (ex. building envelope improvements). This may pose some barriers for those residents who don't have access to other capital that can be used to finance their overall retrofit (as opposed to only the air source heat pump costs). It is ideal to try to work with homeowners to advance building envelope improvements alongside air source heat pump installations. It will be important to gather input from potential customers to better understand the role access to up front capital plays in increasing uptake on building envelope improvements to inform future program improvements over time. CAP sincerely hopes that City of Burlington advances the Better Homes Burlington program and commits to reviewing program outputs and outcomes at a minimum annually to identify potential program improvements and commits to continuous improvements to the program to build the Burlington local retrofit ecosystem and market.

Sincerely, Gabriella Kalapos, Executive Director, Clean Air Partnership ([gkalapos@cleanairpartnership.org](mailto:gkalapos@cleanairpartnership.org))