



February 26, 2026

To: **Mayor and Members of Council**
 426 Brant Street
 Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z6

From: **West End Home Builders' Association**
 1112 Rymal Road East
 Hamilton, Ontario L8W 3N7

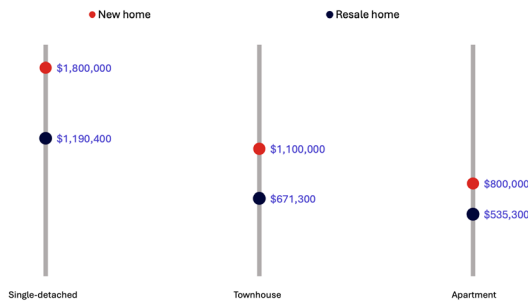
WE HBA Letter: Support for Temporary Two-Year Elimination of Development Charges to Accelerate Housing

Dear Madame Mayor and Members of Council,

On behalf of WE HBA, we are writing to re-iterate our strong support for a temporary, two-year elimination of Development Charges (DCs) as a necessary and urgent measure to save jobs and accelerate housing delivery in Burlington. We support an approach that utilizes federal Housing Accelerator Fund dollars with zero impact on taxpayers. In fact, stimulating new housing construction would have a positive impact on local taxpayers through property tax assessment growth.

The residential construction sector is in freefall as the cost to build a home exceeds what the market can bare. As a result, projects are no longer financially viable, construction activity has stalled, and tens of thousands of workers across Ontario are facing layoffs. Time is of the essence to provide temporary relief.

Average Benchmark Home Price (City of Burlington, December 2025)



Source: Altus, Cornerstone Association of Realtors (provided by CMHC)

New Home Sales – Burlington

Burlington	Annual			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Apt	202	130	72*	4^
TH	11	11	43	13
Summary	213	141	115 (57*)	17

^Note sales/units returned in the fourth quarter reduced Q1-Q3 total.

*Includes sales from now cancelled project (58 units)

(Source: Zonda Urban)

WE HBA notes that the residential construction industry is a significant employer in Burlington, both direct construction and skilled trades jobs on site, and significant downstream supply chain and manufacturing jobs, as well as professional services ranging from planning, to engineering, to finance. In Burlington in 2024, there were 4,318 jobs generating \$328 million in wages through residential construction, of those, 1,365 jobs were attributed to new home construction based on 1,132 housing starts in 2024 (estimates based on 2024 data from Stats Canada and CMHC). In 2025 housing starts dropped to 539 and forecasts remain bleak for 2026. Across the broader region, the Altus Group reports that construction employment has generally been trending down since its peak in 2023 and has fallen some 7.5% in the past year. The Altus Group has estimated that on average over the past five years (2020-2024) there have been some 222,730 jobs supported in the provincial economy from new home building alone.

In a recent report (December 2025), the Altus Group notes, “the sharply lower volumes of construction activity that could come about from a prolonged weak sales period and drying up of the pipeline could mean that this trusted and important jobs engine will stall.... over the next five years, the jobs implication would be: A loss of close to 50,000 direct jobs and a loss of over 50,000 spin off jobs.”



DCs add significantly to the total cost of housing and are ultimately rolled into the purchase price of new homes. This temporary elimination of DCs is a jobs first strategy that would help restore project viability and allow housing developments that are currently in the pipeline and/or on hold to move forward. It is a targeted, time-limited measure that directly addresses the cost pressures preventing new housing from being built today. New homes deliver far-reaching benefits to the City well beyond providing a place to live. They generate property tax revenue, support local businesses, create jobs, and drive significant economic activity throughout the community and the broader region. In contrast, stalled construction delivers none of these benefits while compounding the housing shortage and economic uncertainty.

MOLINARO GROUP	
Molinaro Group – Paradigm Phases 1-3 / Build in 2020s / Units 557	
Pre-Development Value:	\$10,621,000 (2020 land valuation)
Pre-Development Property Tax (2013):	2095 Fairview \$18,706.35 & 2089 Fairview \$19,771.62
Post-Development Value:	\$161,677,000 (2020 dollars)
Post-Development Annual Property Tax	\$1,570,837.56

Source: Molinaro Group

WE HBA is advocating that the Provincial and Federal governments to support the City of Burlington with additional housing enabling infrastructure and we have noted the bold leadership position of the City in proactively taking action. Specifically, we have urged the Federal government to make good on its campaign commitment to reduce development charges by 50 percent (Appendix “A”). We have further called on the Province to re-orientate the Building Faster Fund to ensure that Burlington (and other municipalities demonstrating leadership) are financially rewarded for taking proactive a action to address the housing crisis (Appendix “B”).

We commend Council for its willingness to consider innovative and courageous solutions during this challenging period. A temporary elimination of development charges is a practical, immediate step that will help stabilize the construction sector, protect jobs, and unlock new housing supply for Burlington residents. WE HBA looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with Council to support housing delivery and long-term community prosperity.

Sincerely,

Mike Collins-Williams, MCIP, RPP

Chief Executive Officer

West End Home Builders’ Association



February 25, 2026

To: **Honourable Gregor Robertson**
Minister of Housing and Infrastructure
180 Kent Street, Suite 1100 Ottawa, ON K1P 0B6

From: **West End Home Builders' Association**
1112 Rymal Road East
Hamilton, Ontario L8W 3N7

WE HBA Letter: Calling on the Government of Canada to Honour Its Commitment to Reduce DC by 50% and Support Burlington's Leadership on Housing

Dear Minister Robertson,

On behalf of the West End Home Builders' Association (WE HBA), I am writing to express our strong support for the City of Burlington's plan to advance a bold, two-year 100% Development Charge (DC) exemption and to respectfully urge the Government of Canada to financially incentivize this leadership through a coordinated intergovernmental response. This bold measure still requires final Council approval to proceed.

The City of Burlington and WE HBA shares the Government of Canada's objective of delivering more housing supply and stabilizing the housing market. However, current market realities are making that objective increasingly difficult to achieve. New home sales across the GTHA reached historic lows in 2025. In Burlington specifically, only 17 new multi-residential units were sold across the entire city last year. CMHC's 2026 *Housing Market Outlook* confirms what the industry is already experiencing on the ground: trade uncertainty, slower population growth, and a softening labour market are combining to suppress demand and stall new construction.

For Burlington, the consequences are immediate. Projects that have completed planning approvals and are sitting in the pipeline are not moving forward to permits and construction. Project economics simply no longer work and high upfront development charges are a significant barrier, for shovel ready new housing supply.

Against this backdrop, Burlington is moving decisively. On February 10, 2026, City Council's Committee of the Whole endorsed a motion directing staff to bring forward a by-law amendment establishing a two-year, 100 percent residential DC exemption for units that pull a building permit and demonstrate active construction within that period. This measure, which still requires final council approval, is designed to move stalled projects, protect well-paying construction and related-sector jobs, and ensure Burlington remains positioned to deliver housing.

WE HBA recognizes that this intervention may carry fiscal implications. What is critical to emphasize, however, is that without intervention to reduce taxation, many of these projects will not proceed at all, resulting in zero development charge revenue, lost investment, and continued job losses. Burlington must act because inaction carries greater risk.

In this context, WE HBA respectfully encourages the Government of Canada to fulfill its commitment to cover 50% of municipal DC reductions. National housing targets for 2026 and 2027 will be nearly impossible to achieve in today's environment, thus action to increase funding for housing enabling infrastructure needs to be prioritized.



DCs are indeed out of control in many of Canada's largest cities, and through our national Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA), the WE HBA have long called for this to be addressed. Alternative funding models are required, but DCs need to be lowered for all types of housing, and municipalities must come up with permanent alternative funding models to do this. Simply providing federal and provincial funding to subsidize unacceptably high DC is not the answer alone, this is a start and a short-term fix, but there needs to be a dedicated parallel process to get these cities to a permanent and acceptable solution for DCs that brings affordability back for all forms of housing and gets cities away from overtaxing the next generation of home buyers.

Burlington's proposed approach represents an opportunity to demonstrate what effective intergovernmental partnership looks like: municipalities taking immediate, concrete steps to unlock housing supply, with provincial and federal governments providing the predictable funding support required to make those steps durable. Burlington is demonstrating leadership by responding to economic reality rather than delaying action. WE HBA respectfully urges the Federal Government to match that leadership by providing fiscal support to municipalities that reduce or remove development charges. We stand ready to work collaboratively with all three levels of government to protect jobs, stabilize housing starts, and position Burlington for long-term housing delivery.

Sincerely,

Mike Collins-Williams, MCIP, RPP

Chief Executive Officer

West End Home Builders' Association

Cc: Mayor Marianne Meed Ward, City of Burlington
Kevin Lee, CEO, Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA)



February 24, 2026

To: **Honourable Rob Flack**
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street, Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

From: **West End Home Builders' Association**
1112 Rymal Road East
Hamilton, Ontario L8W 3N7

WE HBA Letter: Re-Orient Building Faster Fund to Supporting Municipal Leadership to Accelerate Housing Starts

Dear Minister Flack,

On behalf of the West End Home Builders' Association (WE HBA), I am writing to urge the Province of Ontario to actively support the City of Burlington's proposed two-year, 100 per cent residential Development Charge (DC) exemption. Under the leadership of Mayor Marianne Meed Ward, Burlington is responding to unprecedented market conditions with decisive, time-limited action aimed at preserving jobs and preventing further erosion of housing starts.

The City of Burlington and WE HBA shares the Province's objective of building more homes, faster. However, current market realities are making that objective increasingly difficult to achieve. New home sales across the GTHA reached historic lows in 2025. In Burlington specifically, only 17 new multi-residential units were sold across the entire city last year. CMHC's 2026 Housing Market Outlook confirms what the industry is already experiencing on the ground: trade uncertainty, slower population growth, and a softening labour market are combining to suppress demand and stall new construction.

For Burlington, the consequences are immediate. Projects that have completed planning approvals and are sitting in the pipeline are not moving forward to permits and construction. This is not due to a lack of municipal planning alignment, it is because project economics no longer work. High upfront development charges are a significant barrier for shovel ready new housing supply. Council's direction to advance a two-year DC exemption for residential units that pull a building permit and demonstrate active construction within that period is therefore both targeted and appropriate. This measure is designed to move projects from approved to built, protect well-paying construction and related-sector jobs, and ensure Burlington remains positioned to deliver housing when market conditions recover.

WE HBA recognizes that this intervention may carry fiscal implications. What is critical to emphasize, however, is that without intervention to reduce taxation, many of these projects will not proceed at all, resulting in zero development charge revenue, lost investment, and continued job losses. Burlington must act because inaction carries greater risk.

In this context, WE HBA respectfully encourages the Province to ensure that the **Building Faster Fund** reflects current market realities. Housing targets for 2026 and 2027 will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve in today's environment. A funding framework focused solely on near-term outcomes risks penalizing municipalities that are taking responsible, shovel-enabling steps to reduce the local tax burden in a weakened market. There is a clear opportunity for the Province to recognize and support municipal leadership by treating temporary DC exemptions as a qualifying, housing-enabling action under the **Building Faster Fund**. Doing so would reinforce Ontario's stated commitment to keeping municipalities whole, while ensuring that approved housing projects are able to advance to construction.



Burlington is demonstrating leadership by responding to economic reality rather than delaying action. WE HBA respectfully urges the Province to match that leadership by providing the fiscal support necessary to make this temporary DC exemption workable and durable. We stand ready to work collaboratively with both the City and the Province to protect jobs, stabilize housing starts, and position Burlington for long-term housing delivery.

Sincerely,

Mike Collins-Williams, MCIP, RPP

Chief Executive Officer

West End Home Builders' Association

Cc: Mayor Marianne Meed Ward, City of Burlington
Scott Andison, CEO, Ontario Home Builders Association