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**To:** [Mailbox, Clerks](#); [Mailbox, Office of the Mayor](#)  
**Cc:** [LIST - Office of Ward 6](#)  
**Subject:** Balanced Approach to Development Charges and Infrastructure Funding  
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Mayor and Members of Council,

I am writing regarding the proposed temporary elimination of residential development charges and the recent discussion about using federal housing funds to offset fee relief without impacting local property taxes, as reported by [BurlingtonToday](#).

The effort to pursue federal housing funding as an offset mechanism is constructive. Leveraging external funding to stimulate housing while protecting local taxpayers reflects prudent financial thinking. If senior government dollars can be used strategically to support housing supply, Burlington should pursue them.

However, even with federal offsets, the core fiscal principle remains unchanged: growth generates infrastructure demand. Development charges are designed to align that demand with dedicated capital funding.

Underfunding infrastructure produces measurable long-term consequences:

- Canada's municipal infrastructure deficit has been estimated in the [hundreds of billions of dollars](#), driven largely by deferred maintenance and insufficient capital replacement. When infrastructure expansion does not keep pace with growth, asset deterioration accelerates and lifecycle costs increase.
- Transit systems already operate under [financial strain across Ontario](#), with operating costs rising faster than revenues and growing dependence on municipal subsidies. If capital expansion lags while population increases, service reliability, frequency, and network capacity decline. Reports describe [ongoing transit funding challenges](#) in Canada, including post-pandemic revenue shortfalls, cost pressures, and warnings of service cuts and fare increases without stronger funding models.
- Social infrastructure like libraries, community centers, parks, emergency services, and stormwater system, face direct usage increases as density rises. Without proportional funding, service quality drops and future capital catch-up becomes more expensive.

Federal housing funds are typically time-limited and program-specific. Development charges, by contrast, provide a predictable and growth-tied funding stream for long-term capital planning. If federal funds are used to offset development charges temporarily, Council must ensure that:

1. Infrastructure projects tied to approved growth remain fully funded.
2. There is no deferral of critical capital projects that would compound future costs.
3. The offset does not create a structural funding gap once federal dollars expire.

Housing supply is important. Infrastructure sustainability is equally important. Accelerating development without securing durable capital funding shifts risk into the future and concentrates cost on the next council and the next generation of taxpayers.

A responsible path forward integrates both objectives: pursue federal housing funding aggressively, maintain disciplined infrastructure financing, and ensure that any fee relief mechanism preserves the city's long-term fiscal stability.

Respectfully,

Quinn Ryan  
Resident of Alton Village, Burlington, ON – Ward 6