

I originally intended to delegate in opposition to any suspension or hold on Development Charges because I do not believe they will achieve their intended aim of lowering home prices.

I understand the argument that reducing development charges may lower the cost of building new houses, possibly reduce the selling price of new housing, spur demand in home sales and jump start a moribund housing market.

While that may work in the immediate term, the price of home ownership has always been determined by broader market forces, of which input costs are only a part of the equation. The hard fact of life is that the selling price of a home will be whatever the market will bear.

Counterintuitively, even if reduced fees stimulate a surge in sales, that increased demand will eventually drive house prices up. Especially in a market where only a small portion of sales are new home sales and existing home sales are hostage to seniors who own their homes outright, hoping for high resale price to finance their retirement and investment property owners, both of whom can afford to hold out until prices rise again.

Meanwhile residents feel a lingering anger that council would even consider development fee forgiveness at significant cost to city reserves or their tax dollars.

During a 30-year housing boom from the mid 1990s to 2024 builders and developers made huge profits while hardly endearing themselves to Burlington residents or city planners. Since 2018, those same developers have lodged approximately 120, self serving zoning appeals to LPAT and OLT demanding greater heights, reduced parking, narrower setbacks and a host of amendments to city plans in pursuit of increased profit. Including a years long appeal of the city's 2020 Official Plan, angering residents and city planners alike while costing our city and taxpayers countless millions of dollars in legal fees over that period.

Decisions on the complex economics of housing prices demand more analysis and more discussion That will require more time and input from staff. The housing crisis is too important to be decided in an atmosphere of haste, anger and mistrust.

So I now find myself thinking that council, staff and city residents should devote more time for economic analysis, study of construction capacity and for more calm and reasoned reflection.

I respectfully ask council to defer any decision on Development Fee Suspension until that analysis and reflection have taken place.

On the subject of council reflection: In 2018 the people of Burlington devoted time, activism and their votes to elect a sea change in a council that we hoped would work

together to address the many issues that faced our city. Development, Intensification, Traffic Congestion, Citizen Engagement, to name just a few, in a respectful and constructive manner. For the first four-year term this council achieved a level of collegial and cooperative interaction that voters had hoped for, and which served our city well.

It seems that collegiality has been lost in this second term. On this and many other important issues, members of council appear much too eager to litigate matters of policy and procedure in the press and on social media.

As elected representatives you are granted one of the largest platforms and loudest megaphones Burlington has to offer. This chamber. This City Hall.

This is where council debate and discussion should take place.

Let's not descend into US style public mudslinging and political divisiveness. It only creates discord and arms the on-line trolls and haters. We all see what that has done for civil discourse and sensible decision making in America.

We do not want that in Burlington and only you can prevent this.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this delegation today.

Jim Young

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Burlington. ON [REDACTED]