

SUBJECT: Government Relations annual report & funding updates

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Corporate Affairs
Government Relations

Report Number: CAF-03-26

Wards Affected: All

Date to Committee: April 13, 2026

Date to Council: April 21, 2026

Recommendation:

Receive for information corporate affairs report CAF-03-26, providing an update on the funding, intergovernmental advocacy, monitoring, and reporting work of Government Relations at the City of Burlington.

Executive Summary

Purpose of report:

- The purpose of this report is to present Committee of the Whole with updates on the activities of the City of Burlington GR staff team, with a particular emphasis on reporting successful funding applications submitted and grants received in 2025.
- The report also offers a brief status update on the City's ongoing partnership with Mohawk College.
- The report provides a brief overview of potential collaboration opportunities on the 1200 King Road property.

Key findings:

- The City of Burlington successfully received \$16,332,823 in funds from senior levels of government 2025.
- The City of Burlington is well positioned for grant readiness, submitting over a dozen funding applications in 2025.
- The City of Burlington is seeing results in 2026 under various funding applications, with over \$3.2M secured.

- The City of Burlington continues to collaborate with Mohawk College in support of their proposed campus expansion and is engaged with stakeholders on shaping the 1200 King Road development.

Implications:

- Financial
 - The City of Burlington seeks to gain financial resources through the pursuit of various funding opportunities to assist in offset project costs, reducing the financial burden of project completion on local ratepayers.
 - The City of Burlington successfully received \$16,332,823 in funding from senior levels of government in 2025. For comparison, in 2023, the City of Burlington received \$6,281,169 in funding from senior levels of government, and \$16,097,440 in 2024. The 2025 total reflects a 160% increase from 2023 and a 1.5% increase from 2024. The leap between years 2023 and 2024 can be explained by the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund program, which provides over \$5,000,000 to the City of Burlington each year of the fund.
 - In 2026, the City has already secured over \$3.2M in funding from senior levels of government. For comparison, at the end of Q1 2025, the City had secured \$1.8M, representing a year over year increase of 78% demonstrating the municipality's grant application readiness and successful project identification screening.
- Legal
 - As the City of Burlington is successful in its funding pursuits, legal agreements need to be reviewed and signed, binding the City to various terms and conditions of the funding and transfer payment agreements.
 - The staffing impacts in reviewing and signing agreements are typically minimal and are requisite to release various funds to the City of Burlington, although some agreements do require more dedicated staff time and resources.
- Communications
 - When the City of Burlington secures external funding, there are often opportunities to communicate the announcement publicly.
 - These announcements may include in-person events with representatives from the funding organization, as well as required or voluntary communications such as media releases, social media posts, and other promotional materials outlined in funding agreements.
 - Supporting these announcements is already part of existing Corporate Affairs Division workflows. Communications and Government Relations regularly work together to provide updates to Burlington residents, businesses, and stakeholders

Information Report

Background

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of Committee with an update on the status of senior government funding applications, including submitted applications awaiting decisions and funding programs that are currently open and being considered by staff.

The report also summarizes key Government Relations (GR) activities that support the City of Burlington's strategic goals, including work related to the 2025 Federal and Ontario general elections. Specifically, it outlines work in the following areas:

- Identifying funding opportunities and supporting applications for strategic priorities and projects;
- Advocating to senior levels of government to advance City priorities, strategic goals, and issues affecting residents, businesses, and City operations;
- Monitoring, reporting on, and providing feedback regarding legislative, regulatory, and policy changes, senior government budgets, and other matters that affect the City's strategic goals and operations;
- Working with municipal associations—including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), and Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM)—to advance shared priorities and influence provincial and federal decision-making; and
- Supporting the Mayor, City Council, and the Executive Leadership Team in advocacy efforts and in creating opportunities for intergovernmental dialogue and collaboration on key issues.

Status

Funding Opportunities

The GR team monitors funding opportunities from senior levels of government and other third-party organizations that municipalities may be eligible for. GR stays informed through media monitoring, participation in municipal and industry associations and information-sharing networks, and informal channels.

When opportunities are identified, GR shares them with the relevant divisions so staff with subject-matter expertise can assess the program requirements and recommend whether the City should proceed. If the City proceeds, GR downloads the application materials and works with the relevant departments to complete the requirements.

Once the application is finalized and reviewed, GR submits it on behalf of the City through the appropriate portal and remains in contact with the funding organization until a decision is made. If funding is approved, GR circulates the agreements and related documentation to the applicable divisions and returns the required materials to the funder to support the release of funds. If an application is not approved, GR and relevant staff may request feedback from the funding organization to understand gaps in the submission; however, funders do not always provide detailed responses.

Successful Applications 2025

Below, and attached in Appendix A, is a high-level summary of each successful intergovernmental funding envelope that the City of Burlington received in 2025.

Total intergovernmental funding received in 2025: **\$16,332,823**

Federal

2025 Total: \$12,909,001

2024 Total: \$11,734,720

2023 Total: \$3,859,000

Year over year, federal funding to the City of Burlington increased by 204% in 2024, and then by another 10% in 2025. The significant bump in 2024 can largely be attributed to the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), that first distributed resources to municipalities in 2024. Despite a federal election, the municipality was still able to secure significant resources from the federal government.

- Canada Community Building Fund: \$6,122,570
- Housing Accelerator Fund: \$5,289,071
- Greening Canada's Community Canopies: \$324,140
- Active Transportation Fund: \$704,190
- Short-Term Rental Enforcement Fund: \$379,860
- Canada Summer Jobs: \$63,354
- Celebrate Canada Grant: \$20,000
- Green Municipal Fund, Zero-Carbon Transformation: \$5,816

Provincial

2025 Total: \$3,423,822

2024 Total: \$4,312,718

2023 Total: \$2,384,879

Provincial funding for the City of Burlington increased by 80% in 2024 and then contracted by 20% in 2025. Much of this drop can be explained by the lack of provincial injection into the Next Generation 9-1-1 Program in 2025 however, the municipality has already been successful under the fund in 2026. Despite a provincial election in 2025, the municipality still managed to secure significant provincial dollars to offset project costs otherwise borne by local ratepayers.

- Provincial Gas Tax: \$2,674,780
- Encampment Response Initiative: \$503,000
- Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program: \$68,820
- Fire Protection Grant: \$66,204
- Next Generation 9-1-1: \$49,590
- Seniors Active Living Centres Program: \$61,428

Successful & Pending Applications 2026

Please see below as well as Appendix A for a summary of funding applications submitted to date in 2026, as well as existing opportunities currently being evaluated by city staff.

Federal

- Canada Public Transit Fund, Baseline Funding: \$1,397,811
- Short-Term Rental Enforcement Fund: \$379,860
- Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program: \$1,000,000
- Canada Public Transit Fund, Metro-Region Agreement: Pending Funding Determination
- Green Municipal Fund, Safe and Active School Routes: Pending Funding Determination

Provincial

- Fire Protection Grant: \$135,808
- Next Generation 9-1-1: \$359,440
- Health and Safety Water Stream: Pending Funding Determination
- Seniors Active Living Centres Program: Pending Funding Determination

Intergovernmental Advocacy Efforts

While GR is frequently engaged in supporting divisions with funding applications, staff also play a key role in communicating advocacy priorities to senior levels of government on behalf of the Mayor and City Council, and in supporting relationship-building between the City, its agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs), and other key stakeholders.

These responsibilities support a whole-of-enterprise approach to advancing municipal and community priorities by identifying opportunities for strategic alignment and joint advocacy where appropriate. When working with ABCs, GR can help coordinate advocacy activities to support alignment with the City's broader objectives, where information is shared and timelines allow. As

ABCs are separate organizations, this coordination depends on early collaboration, planning, and awareness of upcoming advocacy activities.

Below is a summary of several of the main organizations GR meets with regularly to support the City of Burlington's goals and objectives.

- **Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) & Municipal Government Relations Network**
 - AMO works to make municipal governments stronger and more effective. Through AMO, Ontario's 444 municipalities work together to achieve shared goals and meet common challenges.
 - The mandate of the organization is to support and enhance strong and effective municipal government in Ontario. AMO promotes the value of the municipal level of government as a vital and essential component of Ontario and Canada's political system.
 - The Mandate is delivered in a variety of ways. Of particular importance is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AMO and the Province. The MOU provides the opportunity for municipal input and reaction to provincial policy ideas (pre-consultation) so that they are fully informed as part of any provincial policy making process.
 - The MOU also includes a Protocol that obligates the Province to consult with AMO and municipalities on matters that are of a federal-provincial nature that could affect municipal services and finances. The Protocol also sets out the province's commitment to pursue a federal-provincial-municipal framework where municipalities have a 'seat at the federal-provincial table.'

- **Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)**
 - FCM has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901. Its members include more than 2,100 municipalities of all sizes, from Canada's cities and rural communities to northern communities, and 20 provincial and territorial municipal associations. Together, FCM represents more than 92 percent of all Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Municipal leaders from across Canada assemble each year to set FCM policy on key issues.
 - FCM advocates for municipalities to ensure their citizens' needs are reflected in federal policies and programs. The work of the Federation benefits every municipal government and taxpayer in Canada, and their programming delivers tools that help municipalities tackle local challenges.

- **Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) & Chief Administrative Officers Working Group**
 - Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) is comprised of mayors of Ontario cities with populations of 100,000 or more. Collectively, Ontario's Big City Mayors represent nearly 70% of Ontario's population.

- OBCM provides a voice for big city mayors in policy debates that impact Ontario cities. Through policy development, advocacy, discussion and partnerships, Ontario's Big City Mayors support strong and effective cities.
- OBCM achieves this by:
 - Forging relationships with the federal and provincial governments, municipal organizations such as AMO and FCM, and other stakeholders.
 - Meeting with government ministers and representatives to voice the perspective of big cities and work together to achieve shared goals.
 - Taking public positions on key issues and opportunities that affect big cities.
 - Sharing information, data, research, and resources among members and with other governments, stakeholders, and organizations.
 - Participating in government policy consultation processes as the voice of Ontario's big cities.
- **Local Members of Parliament (MP) & Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP)**
 - GR meets annually with the area MPs and all three area MPPs to discuss City of Burlington priorities, areas of alignment, and potential opportunities.
 - GR also connects with MPs and MPPs as needed when issues arise that require coordination with senior levels of government.
 - When funding applications are submitted, City staff advise the relevant senior government offices to support awareness and, where appropriate, to request endorsement.
 - GR provides periodic updates to local MPs and MPPs and identifies opportunities for collaboration and participation in municipal projects and events, including funding announcements.
- **Mohawk College**
 - Throughout 2025, GR met with representatives from Mohawk College in jointly advocating to the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security for their proposed campus expansion into Burlington.
 - Following a delegation arranged by GR between the Mayor, Mohawk College's President, and Minister Quinn at the August 2025 AMO Conference, the College submitted its final Business Case to the Ministry in November 2025.
 - Developed with input from local health teams, hospital partners, Halton Region, the Burlington Chamber of Commerce, and local MPPs, the first phase of the expansion will focus on the College's future Healthcare Campus.
 - In addition to providing academic space, the new campus will strengthen Ontario's healthcare system, support workforce development in high-demand health professions, and reinforce Burlington's role as a city that plans ahead to attract talent, support employers, and invest in long-term economic resilience.

- This work demonstrates the City’s commitment to support this campus expansion through a Letter of Understanding that was signed by the City of Burlington, Burlington Economic Development, and Mohawk College in 2024.
- **1200 King Road Development Opportunity**
 - The City continues to engage with Alinea Land Corporation regarding the 1200 King Road site as part of broader discussions related to growth, development, and long-term city-building objectives in Burlington.
 - These discussions remain exploratory and are focused on understanding potential future opportunities for the site, including how any future development may align with community priorities, service needs, transit-supportive growth, and broader public benefit outcomes.
 - Given the site’s proximity to Aldershot GO and existing all-day, two-way GO service, it represents a strategically located area for considering longer-term opportunities related to housing, community infrastructure, recreation, aquatics, and other supporting amenities. This work is being considered in the context of Burlington’s broader growth planning and future population needs.
 - At this stage, discussions are ongoing and no decisions have been made. The current focus is on collaboration, option development, and understanding the conditions that would be required to support any potential future direction for the site.

Elections

Election periods also create a clear opportunity for GR to advance the City of Burlington’s policy priorities. In 2025, both the Ontario General Election and the Canadian General Election took place. During each writ period, the City compiled and shared its provincial and federal election priorities with candidates running in Burlington’s electoral districts. These materials are intended to inform candidate platforms, provide briefings on key municipal issues, and support relationship-building.

The City’s policy priorities are informed by several sources, including:

- Burlington’s Plan: *From Vision to Focus 2022–26*;
- Burlington’s 2025 Budget;
- Council resolutions and motions;
- Council and Committee business; and
- Input from Members of Council and City staff.

Election-related resources are maintained on the City’s “Elections” webpage (see References). The page provides voting information for residents and also includes advocacy materials for public access. It is updated and repurposed for each election cycle—federal, provincial, and municipal.

Despite two elections occurring in 2025, GR continued to advance funding opportunities help offset costs to municipal taxpayers on priority initiatives. Looking ahead, the federal government remains a minority, and while another Canadian General Election could occur in 2026, there is currently no indication that one is imminent. The provincial government secured a majority and is not expected to be subject to an election in 2026.

In preparation for the 2026 Municipal Election, GR will work with Engagement and Communications to develop an information package for municipal candidates and support the City's intergovernmental affairs during the caretaker period.

Legislative Monitoring

GR is consistently monitors and reviews legislative and regulatory affairs at both the federal and provincial levels of government, as well as reviewing media and academic reports to understand the implications of proposed policy changes and assess potential impacts on municipalities, including the City of Burlington. Early in 2025, this monitoring function was extended to include U.S. legislation in the context of ongoing tariff impacts. Appendix B provides a summary of legislation passed at both the federal and provincial levels of government during the Fall 2025 Legislative Session.

Through the City of Burlington's membership in advocacy organizations such as AMO and FCM, GR receives regular policy and public affairs updates that help inform its work.

These findings are incorporated into GR's advocacy work and are regularly communicated with Members of Council, Executive Leadership Team, and the Senior Leadership Team to inform the City of policy changes and proposals in a timely manner. Regular engagement with Commissioners and their teams helps ensure advocacy activities and funding efforts are aligned with corporate priorities and informed by divisional needs.

Key Dates & Milestones

N/A

Implications

Financial

The City of Burlington seeks to gain financial resources through the pursuit of various funding opportunities that offset project costs thereby reducing the financial burden of project completion on local ratepayers. Moreover, participation with Mohawk College as a project partner may result in a wider pool of potential funding opportunities that the City of Burlington may be otherwise

ineligible for.

The City of Burlington successfully received \$16,332,823 in senior levels of government funding for 2025 and has already successfully secured over \$3.2M in senior levels of government funding for 2026.

Legal

As the City of Burlington is successful in its funding pursuits, legal agreements need to be reviewed and signed binding the city to various terms and conditions of the funding and transfer payment agreements.

The staffing impacts in reviewing and signing agreements are typically minimal and are requisite to release various funds to the City of Burlington, although some agreements do require more dedicated staff time and resources.

Communications

When the City of Burlington secures external funding, there are often communications opportunities to share the announcement.

These may include on-site announcements and photo opportunities with funding representatives, as well as required or voluntary communications such as media releases, social media posts, and other promotional materials outlined in funding agreements.

Supporting these announcements is part of Corporate Affairs Division workflows, with Communications and GR working together to provide timely updates to Burlington residents and stakeholders.

References

- City of Burlington. (2025). 2025 Ontario Provincial Election: Top Priorities for Our City. Retrieved from: <https://www.burlington.ca/en/council-and-city-administration/2025-election-municipal-policy-priorities.aspx>
- City of Burlington. (2025). 2025 Canadian Federal Election: Top Priorities for Our City. Retrieved from: <https://www.burlington.ca/en/council-and-city-administration/2025-canadian-federal-election-top-priorities-for-our-city.aspx>

Strategic Alignment

- Designing and delivering complete communities
- Providing the best services and experiences

- Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change
 - Driving organizational performance
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Appendices:

- A. Senior Government Funding Approved & Pending as of March 2026
- B. Fall 2025 Legislative Session Summary

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and approved by the Commissioner, Head of Corporate Affairs, Chief Financial Officer, and Commissioner of Legal and Legislative Services/City Solicitor.