City Talk

Winter 2024

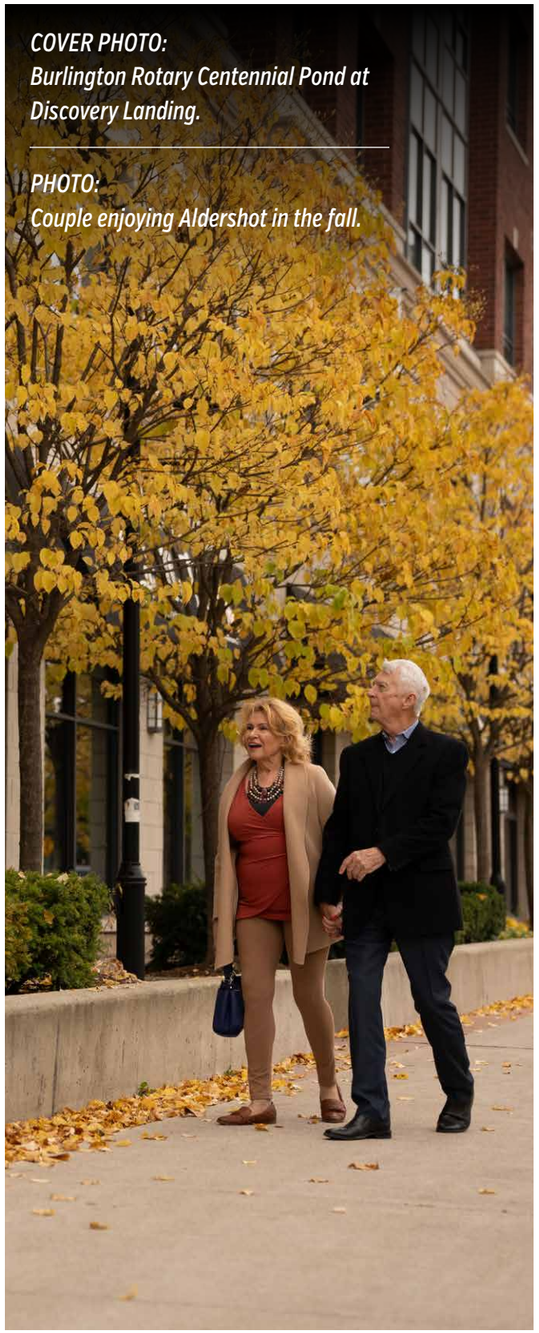
News from your municipal government



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CITY OF Burlington



COVER PHOTO:
Burlington Rotary Centennial Pond at Discovery Landing.

PHOTO:
Couple enjoying Aldershot in the fall.

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Mayor

Marianne
Meed Ward

burlington.ca/mayor

This review, and any outcomes, are fundamentally about democracy and your representation at the municipal level, so it is important that we hear from residents.

Committed to serving you

The city is currently in the middle of a review of ward boundaries and council size and structure, which hasn't been done since 1997, with only a ward boundary review done in 2005. This review is being undertaken to ensure that the needs of our residents are best met and that communities are represented in the decision-making process.

Our council structure is unique in Ontario with six councillors plus the Mayor making up the entire governing body for the City, and all seven members being a part of the governing body of Halton Region. Additionally, all councillors are Deputy Mayors with portfolios and sit on numerous agencies, boards and commissions. With the size of council at seven members, this means that four votes can determine the outcome of any decision.

We are the smallest council for a municipality of our size in the region with seven members serving a population of 186,948. If the wards had balanced populations, that is approximately 27,707 residents per councillor. Nearby Halton municipalities are half that. For comparison, our neighbours in Milton have nine members serving a population of 132,979, with 14,775 residents per councillor; and Oakville has 15 members serving a population of 213,759, with 14,251 residents per councillor.

Do you prefer the status quo or an increase in council size, and if so, how big should our council be? Should we double the size to be like other Halton municipalities? Adding councillors would come at an additional cost - do you want to pay more for representation?

Regarding ward boundaries, should they be redrawn to better distribute population and account for future growth while considering communities of interest? I've heard from people on the west side of Maple that feel they are more aligned with Ward 2 (Downtown) than Ward 1 (Aldershot). Does our rural community feel appropriately represented with three councillors plus the mayor, or would a single rural representative be best?

I am open to increasing council size and redrawing boundaries but want to hear your thoughts. To take effect for the 2026 municipal election, we need to make a decision by December of 2025.

Please reach out to me directly by emailing mayor@burlington.ca or see the companion article on page 5 to learn more about how to get involved in the discussion.

burlington.ca/mayor



Ward 1 - Councillor

Kelvin Galbraith

Deputy Mayor for Business and Red Tape Reduction

burlington.ca/ward1

Ward 1 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 1:

- Stop by to speak to me at two upcoming Drop-In Sessions - Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 from 1 - 2:30 p.m. and Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025 from 6:30 - 8 p.m. at Mapleview Shopping Centre Food Court, 900 Maple Ave., Upper Level. Residents can stop by at anytime within those hours to speak to me individually. Residents are scheduled in 10-minute slots on a first-come, first-serve basis;
- Park Avenue East & West, and Aldershot Place will see road reconstruction in 2025, including sidewalks on one side of each street, storm sewers, water and wastewater mains;
- Waterdown Road construction will continue for the next two years. Visit burlington.ca/waterdown for details;
- There are new programs for older adults in the community rooms at Aldershot Pool and Aldershot Arena. Reach out to my office for details;
- To see an up-to-date list of Ward 1 developments, visit burlington.ca/ward1.

For full updates on what's happening in Ward 1, subscribe to my newsletter by emailing ward1@burlington.ca.

burlington.ca/ward1



Ward 2 - Councillor

Lisa Kearns

Deputy Mayor for Community Engagement and Partnerships

burlington.ca/ward2

Ward 2 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 2:

Engagement Opportunities

- Ward 2 Update at City Hall on Jan. 29 and Feb. 26 at 7 p.m.
- Coffee and Chat at the Seniors' Centre on Feb. 8 at 10 a.m.
- Ward 2 Environmental Forum at the Art Gallery of Burlington on Apr. 2 at 7 p.m.

Local Events - Don't miss the Burlington Festival of Lights at Spencer Smith Park, now until Jan. 2025.

Check out ongoing events at the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Art Gallery of Burlington, and Seniors' Centre.

Prospect Street Renewal - The City of Burlington will be resurfacing Prospect St. from Grahams Ln. to Cumberland Ave. and installing new bicycle facilities. Additionally, the Region will be upgrading water and wastewater mains in the area. Learn more at burlington.ca/prospectrenewal.

Stay Informed - Explore resources and services, development, transit, bylaws, and more at burlington.ca. If you need assistance, email my office at ward2@burlington.ca or call us at 905-335-7600, ext. 7368.

Stay up to date on news and events, subscribe to my monthly newsletter by emailing ward2@burlington.ca.

burlington.ca/ward2



Ward 3 - Councillor

Rory Nisan

Deputy Mayor for the Environment

burlington.ca/ward3

Ward 3 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 3:

Ward Updates

Thank you to everyone who recently attended my townhalls. Road safety, addressing traffic and affordability were clear concerns for residents.

I have successfully brought several motions recently, including support for family doctors, private well water testing, air quality, and a request to deny the expansion of the Mount Nemo Quarry.

Deputy Mayor Updates

Automated Speed Enforcement is coming. I brought a motion supported by council that doubled the number of initial cameras to six. These cameras will keep the community safe. Any extra revenue will go towards road safety measures.

Ward 3 was the hardest hit area for flooding this year. As these events become more common, we have to be ready. We are looking into strategic investments to put us in the best possible position in the future. Council is also looking into options for free transit. I am particularly interested in whether we can offer free transit to youth all day every day.

Stay up to date by subscribing to my newsletter at ward3@burlington.ca.

burlington.ca/ward3



Ward 4 - Councillor

Shawna Stolte

Deputy Mayor for Housing

burlington.ca/ward4

Ward 4 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 4:

We are pleased to announce that a recent assessment on Woodview Road has concluded that traffic calming measures are necessary between Fairview Street and Rexway Drive. A Public Information Session was conducted on Oct. 21 to present draft designs. Ongoing traffic calming studies will continue throughout Ward 4 to enhance safety for all residents.

In my role as Deputy Mayor for Housing, along with City staff, we are making significant progress on our Housing Strategy, which emphasizes initiatives aimed at promoting affordable and accessible housing options within our community.

On November 5, we hosted our mid-Ward 4 "Coffee and Conversation," featuring Alison Enns, Manager of Policy and Community. Together, we discussed the implementation of key actions within the City's Housing Strategy.

Lastly, we are grateful for the participation at the Grand Opening celebration of Lansdown Park. We encourage everyone to visit the newly opened pickleball courts at Palmer Park.

To receive monthly updates, subscribe to my monthly newsletter by emailing ward4@burlington.ca

burlington.ca/ward4



Ward 5 - Councillor

Paul Sharman

Deputy Mayor for Strategy and Budgets

burlington.ca/ward5

Ward 5 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 5:

Ward 5 is seeing significant development and infrastructure improvements to enhance community livability and sustainability. Projects include:

- Robert Bateman Community Centre
- Burloak Rail Underpass and Construction
- Skyway Arena
- Bromley Road Construction
- Dundas Street Improvements

For a complete list of current developments and application statuses, visit burlington.ca/ward5.

Get Involved - As winter arrives, it's a great time to connect with our community! Email ward5@burlington.ca.

Orchard Community Hub - A space for community groups to offer free activities, programs, or events. Groups interested in using the space can email communityconnects@burlington.ca.

Other local groups and opportunities include:

- 100 Seeds of Joy
- Burlington Lions
- Burlington Men's Shed
- Creative Community Hive
- Elizabeth Gardens Creative Collective
- Love My Neighbourhood Program

Stay informed. Sign up for my newsletter on burlington.ca/ward5 or follow me on social media @PaulSharmanCouncillor.

burlington.ca/ward5



Ward 6 - Councillor

Angelo Bentivegna

Deputy Mayor for Recreation and Community Services

burlington.ca/ward6

Ward 6 update

Here's what's happening in Ward 6:

Evergreen Development

Evergreen Community Ltd. is working on the detailed design of a new neighbourhood at 5421, 5453 and 5463 Dundas St. and 3232 Tremaine Rd. This Community will include approximately 1300 new homes, space for 800 jobs, parks and open spaces. The existing forest is being preserved and will include an eco passage for wildlife to pass safely under one of the new streets.

City Council adopted a plan for this development in 2018. This summer, the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) approved zoning regulations and a draft plan of subdivision for the Evergreen Community.

Next steps: Evergreen Community Ltd. is working on a detailed design to meet the conditions of approval required by the City, Halton Region, Conservation Halton and local utilities. The detailed design process usually lasts a couple years and must be completed before construction can begin.

For more information visit burlington.ca/evergreensubdivision.

Stay up to date on Ward 6 news, meetings and events, subscribe to my monthly newsletter by emailing ward6@burlington.ca.

burlington.ca/ward6

Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review - Summary of Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement is coming for 2025

Review impacts how you're represented in local government

Burlington is planning for its future through a Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review. The review will help ensure voters are represented equally in the local government decision-making process no matter where they live in the city.

Why is a review needed now?

Burlington City Council is currently made up of the Mayor and six Councillors. This group also sits on Halton Regional Council. The last ward boundary review for Burlington was done in 2005, when the city's population was 139,000. Since this time, the city's population has grown to approximately 186,948 (2021 Census). Over the next 25 years, the city will continue to grow. Approximately 265,000 people are expected to call Burlington home by 2051.

Reviewing how well the current size and structure of our Council and wards work for our community now and in the future is important.

Factors to consider

Input from residents is one of many factors considered in the review. Other principles guiding the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review include:

- Geographic representation, e.g. the physical boundaries in the city
- Future population trends
- Communities of interest, e.g. keeping neighbourhoods together
- Representation by population, e.g. wards with a similar population size

Public engagement opportunities

There are two phases of public engagement for the Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review.

The first phase of engagement began in the fall and wrapped up in early November. Residents were asked for their input on the size and structure of Council. Feedback was gathered through six information sessions, an online survey, a virtual public meeting, at Food for Feedback, and at a meeting of Burlington's Youth Student Council. Participants could also leave their questions and comments on the City's online public engagement portal getinvolvedburlington.ca/boundaryreview.

Data gathered from the community in phase one has informed an interim report going City Council for their consideration in December 2024. The report explores Council composition options.

In the second phase of public engagement, in early 2025, residents will be asked to provide their thoughts on options for ward boundaries. Multiple public engagement opportunities across the city are planned. Please consider getting involved to help ensure your voice is well represented in your local government. Subscribe to getinvolvedburlington.ca/boundaryreview for the latest project updates.

A final report and recommendations about Burlington's Council composition and ward boundaries will be presented to City Council in the Spring of 2025.

getinvolvedburlington.ca/boundaryreview



Housing Strategy update

Housing options welcome for all

Housing options for everyone are welcome in Burlington. By prioritizing housing solutions, municipalities like ours can enhance overall economic vitality, community health and sustainability.

Burlington's Housing Strategy creates a road map and acts as a guiding document for housing needs in our city. It will help us work towards meeting the housing needs of the Burlington community. It is important people have housing options that are affordable and attainable. The Housing Strategy emphasizes the City's role and opportunity to address the missing middle. Missing middle housing refers to types of multi-unit housing that fit between single-family homes and large apartment buildings in terms of size and density. This includes housing options like garden suites, secondary suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, row houses, courtyard homes, and small apartment buildings (up to four stories).

We want to help diversify housing types. We're increasing Burlington's housing options in our neighbourhoods. The City has been engaging the community on four units as-of-right and other ways we can enable the range of housing options available.

The City has been engaging with the public about our Community Improvement Plan Study. We are looking at incentives to create new rental housing across the city.

Burlington's population is expected to grow by over 40 per cent in the next 25 years. The Assessment Growth in the City's 2025 Budget is estimated to be 0.75 per cent and will come from new construction across Burlington.

The City received $21 million from the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) to encourage more affordable homes for Burlington. HAF provides funding directly to municipalities nationally to support initiatives to accelerate the housing supply. Burlington had 857 new construction housing starts in the first nine months of 2024. The significant rise in Burlington's new housing starts is a testament to the City's renewed focus and leadership on housing.

As Burlington continues to grow, the HAF plan supports the development of complete, climate-resilient communities that are affordable and inclusive.

The City will open its HAF incentive program on Dec. 1, 2024. These incentives are available until Dec. 31, 2026.

- Residential homeowners and not-for-profits can get a fee waiver on all municipal fees associated with new, eligible, ARU permits.
- Not-for-profits can get a fee waiver on all municipal fees associated with new, eligible, affordable rental housing for non-profits and if they receive their building permit by Dec. 31, 2026.

Watch for more details, such as detailed criteria and how to apply, at burlington.ca/HAF.

getinvolvedburlington.ca/housingstrategy
burlington.ca/HAF

Public Engagement at the City

Public engagement is both a science and an art. By taking internationally accepted and recognized engagement methods and applying them to the city as a whole or small neighbourhoods, we're moving forward together. We're using online tools for easy access, such as polls, surveys and virtual meetings. We're trying to meet you where you are, at retail spaces, parks, events and community centres. We're providing more information in more formats, such as letters, information centres, e-newsletters and translations. For us to work for you, we need to work with you. Join us at getinvolvedburlington.ca.

2024 Engagement Highlights:

- 12,165 surveys or polls completed
- 81,488 visits to Get Involved Burlington engagement webpage
- 9,986 documents downloaded
- 119 engagement opportunities available in the Public Engagement Calendar
- Almost 7,000 people subscribed to the weekly newsletter
- 49 newsletters sent in 2024
- Newsletter open rate of 57%, is more than twice the industry standard

This year, Burlington community members provided feedback on City priorities such as the 2025 Budget, Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review, Downtown Parking Plan, Fare Free Transit Survey, and Official Plan.

getinvolvedburlington.ca





2025 BUDGET



Each year, the City of Burlington reviews its annual budget to make sure we have the funds needed for City operations, programs and services. These investments keep a high quality of life for Burlington residents and businesses. Budgets aren't just about money; they directly affect residents through City programs and services. Whether it's road plowing, using a park or cooling off in a pool, your tax dollars are at work.

Work on the City of Burlington's 2025 budget began in May. Residents, businesses, partners, staff and council were invited to give feedback at getinvolvedburlington.ca/2025budget, at six in-person consultation meetings, at a telephone town hall and during committee and council meetings. This feedback was presented to City Council to help them prioritize projects and services.

Four Main Principles

This year there are four main principles that balance providing for today while preparing for our future:

All new investments in 2025 were considered based on how they satisfied the four principles.

- **Affordability**
  Balance providing for today while preparing for Burlington's future.
- **Livability**
  Making sure the quality of life for the residents of Burlington is upheld and the services they depend on are enhanced, especially as the City continues to grow by over 40 per cent in the next 25 years.
- **Sustainability**
  The budget must provide for present needs while preparing for the future.
- **Transparency**
  Residents have asked for a simpler, easier to track and understand presentation of the budget, earlier in the process. A draft budget summary was released in September and provided an initial look for residents. The budget book is also being revised to be easier to understand.

Community Feedback

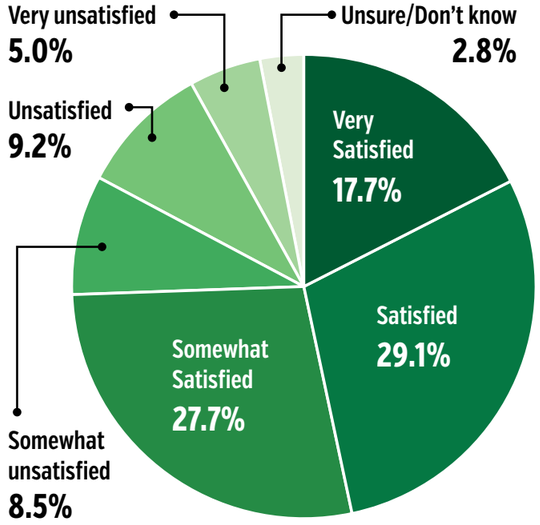
This budget considered feedback that residents shared with staff and council through various engagement opportunities, including Food for Feedback, the online budget survey, the budget workbook, six Mayor's pre-budget consultation meetings, Community Panel Focus Group and delegations to committee and council.

Burlington residents engaged with the City more than 4,500 times on this year's budget.

Online Survey Highlights

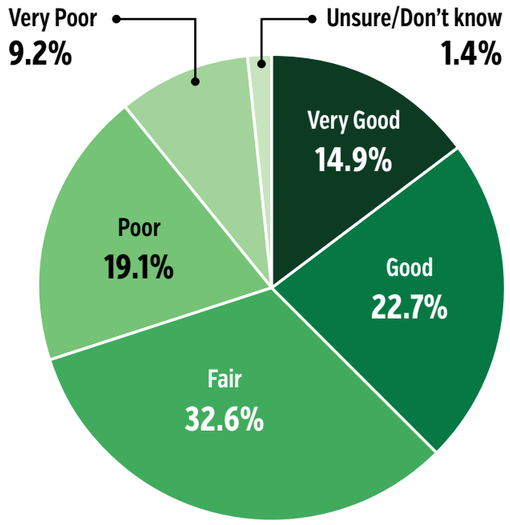
Think about the programs and services the City provides. As a taxpayer, how satisfied are you with City services?

74.5% of respondents were either very satisfied, satisfied or somewhat satisfied.



Think about the programs and services the City provides. How would you rate the value you receive for your property tax dollars?

70.2% of survey respondents believe the value for property taxes as very good, good or fair.



Council also had the opportunity to bring motions to modify the budget and there were opportunities for the public to engage throughout the budget process.

The City's budget includes both capital and operating expenditures, as well as non-tax revenue sources. The capital budget is funded from a variety of sources, including reserves, development charges and upper-level government funding.

2025 BUDGET



What You Get for Your Investment



Development and Growth Management:
This service ensures building permits and inspections comply with the Building Code Act and Ontario Building Code. It reviews and approves development applications per the Ontario Planning Act. It promotes public safety and consumer protection through education, licensing, permitting, and enforcement of municipal bylaws.



Community Services:
This service provides specialized transportation for individuals with disabilities, supports community connections, and enhances Burlington's quality of life. It coordinates emergency preparedness and recovery efforts, including fire safety and public education. It also offers diverse recreation programs and customer response services to meet community needs.



Public Works:
This service maintains parks, open spaces, and surface water drainage to ensure safety and accessibility. It provides year-round road and sidewalk maintenance, including traffic management and parking compliance. It also oversees environmental management, strategic infrastructure, and urban forest resilience.



Legal and Legislative Services:
This service facilitates public access to Council decision-making, ensuring transparent local government. It provides strategic legal advice, manages City insurance and claims, and supports real estate transactions. It helps Council and City units achieve their goals through legal and risk management services.



Enabling Services:
This service supports city functions by pursuing funding, building partnerships, and providing independent audits. It manages human resources, technology solutions, and financial operations, including procurement, tax billing, and payroll. It also leads communication strategy and resident engagement in decision-making.

Top 5 Capital Investments in 2025

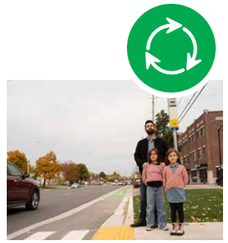
Capital programs are a significant investment every year. In 2025, the top five capital investment programs will:

- increase park use;
- promote community engagement;
- decrease traffic congestion;
- increase transit ridership and
- reduce flood risk in high-priority areas











Budget Process

This year's budget will be the second under the Strong Mayors legislation from the Province of Ontario which requires mayors to present a budget for Council consideration, or direct staff to present a budget. This year, the Mayor issued a Mayoral Direction, which was endorsed by council, to direct staff to prepare and present the budget based on four principles: Affordability, Livability, Sustainability and Transparency.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

June 10
2025 Financial needs and multi-year forecast report went to Committee of the Whole.

August to November
Pre-Budget consultation and engagement.

Oct. 25
Proposed Budget Report posted to the City's website.

Nov. 4
Proposed budget presented to Committee of the Whole.

Delegations welcome.

Nov. 11
Proposed amendments from Councillors posted online.

Nov. 18 & 21
Review and voting on council amendments at Budget Committee.

Delegations welcome.

Nov. 25
Special Council meeting for budget approval.

Budget deemed approved.

For more information, visit getinvolvedburlington.ca/2025budget and burlington.ca/budget.



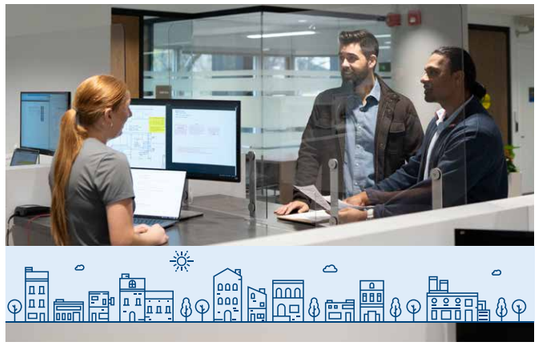
Civic recognition honours outstanding volunteers

The City celebrated its second Civic Recognition ceremony in October. The event honours residents for their outstanding volunteer efforts in the community. City Council hands out civic recognition twice each year, in the spring and fall. The new initiative provides an opportunity for the Mayor and members of Council to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible contributions made by individuals and groups who volunteer their time to make Burlington better.

Successful recipients are recognized at a Burlington Council meeting where they are presented with a certificate. Learn more about this year's recipients, who have contributed significantly to the quality of life in the community through their volunteer efforts, at burlington.ca/civicrecognition.

Nominations for civic recognition are open year-round. Check out the criteria and nominate someone today at burlington.ca/civicrecognition.

burlington.ca/civicrecognition



AI tools speed up development approvals

Recently, the City was a finalist in the Gartner Eye of Innovation Awards for Government and was honoured by CIO Awards Canada. The recognition was earned for Burlington's use of artificial intelligence (AI) to streamline the development approval process. Burlington's population is expected to grow by over 40 per cent in the next 25 years. Approving development efficiently is crucial to enable more homes and manage growth.

AI is one way we're enhancing the development approval process. In a pilot, two AI tools were trained to assess zoning bylaws for employment buildings and evaluate architectural drawings against the rules of the Ontario Building Code. Applicant building designs were uploaded to the AI tools and immediate feedback was provided about which aspects of the design met the bylaws/rules.

The digital innovation led to some efficiencies, including less time spent on design revisions and improved transparency about the development process. Based on this success, plans to expand the pilot in 2025 are underway.

burlington.ca/news



A plan to increase housing options in Burlington

The Official Plan Amendment to Increase Housing Options

The Burlington Official Plan, 2020 (BOP, 2020) is the City's long-term vision to 2031 and beyond. It sets out strategic priorities for growth, land use and infrastructure. This policy framework guides the City's decisions and approvals to make sure that all new development fits into this long-term vision.

Staff are looking at ways to increase housing options by using its Official Plan and zoning bylaw to create new policies and regulations to support housing options. The goal is to implement the Actions of the Housing Strategy and Housing Accelerator Fund Action Plan to support more housing options in our neighbourhoods.

In 2025, staff will present a report to Council. Delegations are welcome! After that, Phase 3 of the project will launch.

getinvolvedburlington.ca/housingstrategy
getinvolvedburlington.ca/officialplan

Community news









PHOTOS: Winter in Burlington. The Burlington Pier located at Spencer Smith Park. Winter festivities in Village Square.

Happy Holidays!

The City's administrative services will be closed between Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Wednesday, Jan. 1, re-opening Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025.

burlington.ca/news

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- Facility, sports field and pool closures
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