



March 12, 2025
Delivered via email

Her Worship Andrea Horwath
Mayor, City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

RE: Striking a Hamilton Housing and Develop Task Force / Deferral of Development Charges

Dear Mayor Horwath,

On behalf of the West End Home Builders' Association (WE HBA), we are writing to express our concern regarding the declining housing market in the City of Hamilton. We are increasingly challenged by a combination of economic and regulatory factors, including rising costs due to tariffs, an overly complex approvals process, and bureaucratic delays that hinder the construction of new housing supply. These challenges combined with high taxes on new housing contribute to decreased housing supply, affordability concerns, job losses and economic stagnation within our city.

As you know, housing is a critical driver of economic growth and community well-being. However, Hamilton's housing sector faces growing barriers that prevent efficient and effective residential development. The cumulative impact of lengthy planning approvals, a growing list of consultant report requirements and regulatory red tape, places undue strain on home builders and prospective homeowners alike. These constraints are contributing to a stagnation in housing supply, making it increasingly difficult to meet the demands of a growing population.

Further highlighting the severity of the issue, the **Canadian Home Builders' Association Benchmarking Report** by the Altus Group ranks Hamilton last among major Canadian cities in planning timelines. This indicates a critical need for reform to ensure that Hamilton remains a viable and attractive destination for housing investment and development.

To address these pressing concerns, we urge the City of Hamilton to take a proactive approach by establishing a **Housing and Development Task Force**, similar to initiatives undertaken by neighboring municipalities. For example, the **City of Burlington's Pipeline to Permit Committee** is successfully identifying and eliminating bottlenecks in the approvals process, expediting much-needed development. Likewise, the **Mayor's Housing Task Force in Mississauga** brings key stakeholders together to drive innovative solutions and policy recommendations to boost supply and make housing more attainable. Key among those recommendations, which the City of Hamilton should immediately implement given the current dire economic situation, is a **deferral in the payment of development charges from permit stage to occupancy stage**.

A dedicated Housing and Development Task Force in Hamilton would provide an opportunity for industry leaders, municipal officials, and community stakeholders to collaborate on actionable strategies to remove barriers and accelerate housing development. We believe such an initiative is



crucial to ensuring Hamilton remains competitive, attracts investment, and is capable of meeting the housing needs of its current and future residents.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal further and explore how WE HBA can support the City in developing a framework for the Task Force. We look forward to your leadership in addressing this critical issue to develop an action plan to review development approvals and permit processes to facilitate the construction of new housing supply.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We remain committed to working collaboratively to ensure Hamilton continues to be a vibrant and thriving community.

Sincerely,

Mike Collins-Williams, MCIP, RPP
Chief Executive Officer
West End Home Builders' Association