

Mayor Rick Goldring;  
Councillor Rick Craven  
Councillor Marianne Meed Ward  
Councillor John Taylor  
Councillor Jack Dennison  
Councillor Paul Sharman  
Councillor Blair Lancaster  
City Hall  
426 Brant Street,  
Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z6

Dear Mayor Goldring & Members of Council,

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association is proud to be a community leader in promoting a greener future. Our mandate has long been that through AWARENESS raising, ADVOCACY, and ACTION, we aim to mobilize individuals, groups, business, and governments to make Burlington a leader in creating a healthy, environmentally responsible city.

We have always felt it important to be a strong voice in urging environmental protection measures for the benefit of everyone in our wonderful city, now and for years to come. This is a crucial time for Burlington in planning for that future. Our city is in a time of transition as we face the conflicting challenges of build-out and population growth. Challenges of intensification, infill practices, habitat destruction, and effective transportation make sustainable planning a high priority.

Sustainability doesn't just happen. If we want our city's direction to be towards a future where a better quality of life is possible, we have to put the roadmap in place to get there. It's also important that we move forward together - that it is not just BurlingtonGreen's voice urging change, but a chorus of voices from everyday people who want Council to make those responsible, sustainable choices.

In September 2014, with the support of a MEC Advocacy and Awareness Grant, BurlingtonGreen launched the Greenprint for the Future campaign to raise awareness and engage the public in advocacy for policy change. The actions BurlingtonGreen is calling for are as follows:

*I would like to see green spaces for children now and in the future; better public transport instead of more roads.*  
- Megan Haley

- **PRESERVE Green space** - The City of Burlington needs a comprehensive green space inventory and acquisition plan so officials can make informed decisions about protecting natural areas and parklands before they are threatened.
- **PROTECT Urban Trees** - Burlington Council needs to vote YES to establish a practical, effective private property tree bylaw to protect our city's vital urban tree canopy.

- **SAVE Farmland** - The City of Burlington must support a Food & Water First policy to stop development on prime farmland and protect our vital agriculture sector, food supply, and clean water.
- **CONSERVE Natural Habitat** - Burlington officials need to say NO to the LaSalle Park Marina expansion for the preservation of wildlife and YES to ensuring all development plans start with protecting at-risk habitats.
- **PLAN Effective Transportation** - The City of Burlington needs to integrate effective, sustainable transportation opportunities into all key planning policies to create a healthier environment and better quality of life for the citizens of Burlington.

*Protecting species habitats should be a priority for Burlington.* - Abigale Robson

Over the past eight months the Greenprint travelling Roadshow hosted by our Advocacy Coordinator Jannene MacNeil has visited **36 events** and reached out to more than **10,000 people**, including a number of City Council members and Provincial and Federal representatives we met at events and in separate meetings to discuss these issues.

In order to ensure we were engaging the widest possible public audience, we targeted a diverse range of events, with fewer than one third (31 per cent) of the stops being at environmentally-focused activities. The Greenprint Roadshow was at local businesses talking with customers, community festivals such as the Tansley Woods New Year's Day Family Celebration, and public meetings on neighbourhood issues. We made extensive efforts to engage and inform the general youth population, taking the Roadshow to all 10 high schools in Burlington - not targeting environmental clubs but with interactive displays for the general school population.

The response from the people of Burlington has been overwhelmingly positive. One of the main tools we used to ask individuals to express their opinion was the Impact Card. The card listed all five of the platform issues. People check-marked the ideas they agreed with and were invited to write comments we could share with you, our elected officials.

*I applaud your (BurlingtonGreen) work and thank you for it.*  
- Hans Jacobs

Visitors completed 297 print Impact Cards at our Roadshow display and a further 57 people responded online. Of the **354 citizens who completed Impact Cards, 208 respondents chose to leave comments** to lend their voice for change. From the print card responses, 89 per cent agreed with the preserve greenspace platform; 85 per cent called for a private property tree protection bylaw; 86 per cent want Burlington to be a Food & Water First community; 85 per cent want to protect natural habitats, particularly that of the Trumpeter Swan (300 people visiting the booth also signed a petition calling for Council to say no to the LaSalle Park Marina expansion

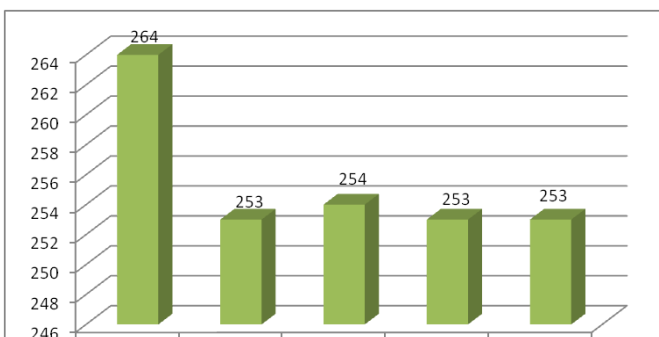


Figure 1 Impact Card respondents in favour of each platform  
Paper-based Responses

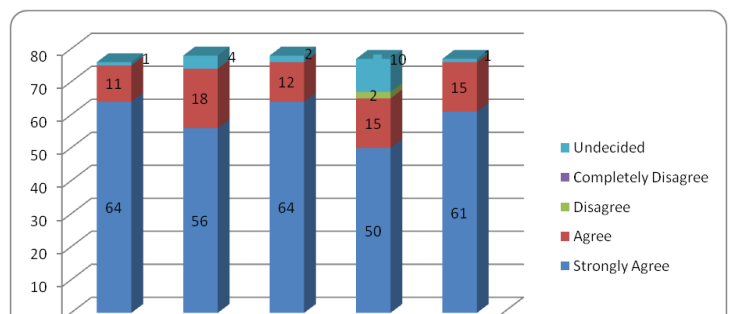


Figure 2 Impact Card respondents in favour of each platform  
Online Responses

project); and 85 per cent want Burlington to integrate sustainable transportation into all key planning policies.

The online Impact Card survey asked respondents to express their view from Strongly Agree to Completely Disagree or Undecided. Overwhelmingly, response for every platform area was “strongly agree”<sup>1</sup>.

*The City must ensure that urban sprawl does not pass the 407. The city is becoming more built up around Hwy 5 but that must be limit. The escarpment is too valuable to be eaten up by sprawl.*  
– Aysha Bayes

We have included some of the comments from respondents throughout this letter and more are listed at the bottom. In addition to these submitted comments, we want to highlight a topic of many of the conversations. Numerous people were curious about the display

*With more seniors than ever in this area we need to preserve space that can be enjoyed - green space - especially the LaSalle Park. This place is currently enjoyed by all. To ruin it by expanding the marina would be only favourable to the wealthy who can afford a boat.*  
- Laurier Mantel

materials on the LaSalle Park Marina expansion. Very few had heard of the proposal and many were upset at the lack of public information available prior to visiting our display. Only one person throughout the campaign approached the booth to say he was in favour of the project.

In fact, very few people provided negative feedback on any of the platform issues. Many people asked for clarification about what a private property tree bylaw might entail. Quite often people who were not familiar with the issue and expressed reservations about the need for the bylaw were still interested in hearing more about why it is necessary. Significantly more people were under the impression that Burlington already had a private property tree bylaw and were very upset to discover this was not the case.

We are so pleased that so many individuals have added their voices in urging action. We trust Burlington City Council is as committed to ensuring a sustainable future as the **thousands** of Burlington residents we’ve spoken with over the last several months are. A better future needs a plan to make it a reality. Our Greenprint platform lays out some key fundamentals of that plan.

BurlingtonGreen asks Council to move forward with the following five action items:

- Commit staff resources to develop a greenspace inventory (city and privately owned tracts of greenspace) and acquisition plan, particularly in the face of increased intensification in our city;
- Put in motion the development of an effective private property tree bylaw based on the best practises of other municipalities in our Province that have made urban canopy protection a priority;
- Declare Burlington a Food & Water first community
- Vote in favour of protecting habitat over expanding the LaSalle Park Marina.

*Set a new standard in city planning for all other municipalities to follow. Be a leader in a sustainable, natural, healthy, and geonomic environment. Be innovative in your approach. - Michelle Lokun*

*Mitigation is not protection.*  
– Connie Cody

<sup>1</sup> In some instances, total online responses per question add up to more than the stated number of completed online surveys (57). Valid surveys without every question answered are listed as “incomplete” by the online analysis tool. Up to 78 respondents answered questions about the platform issues.

- Integrate sustainable transportation in all development planning – before shovels go in the ground.

Environmental leaders David Suzuki and Al Gore emphasize that while individual actions to lead a greener lifestyle are needed to rescue the health of our planet, in order to ensure actions are sustainable, we must advocate to all levels of government to make the environment a priority. We look forward to Council capably addressing these important issues.

Respectfully,

Jannene McNeil  
 Advocacy Program Coordinator  
 &  
 Amy Schnurr  
 Executive Director

BurlingtonGreen Environmental Association

c.c. Eleanor McMahon,  
 MPP, Burlington

Indira Naidoo-Harris,  
 MPP, Halton

**A selection of Impact Card Comments:**

- *The main issue that I strongly agree with is the Urban Tree issue. We need to establish a practical, effective private property tree bylaw, because as the years go on we need to establish a sustainable living environment.*  
 - *Sharmina Brasseur*
- *I would like to see green spaces for children now and in the future, better public transport instead of more roads.*  
 - *Megan Haley*
- *My biggest concern is the rate at which this city is being "developed". Please preserve our green spaces and protect our natural habitats. The last think this city needs is another condo being built or another strip mall! Enough already.*  
 - *Marnie Mycroft*
- *It is unacceptable that the issues in this survey are even still ISSUES- they should have been developed and dealt with long ago. Politicians will be responsible for how quickly this earth heals or devolves into uninhabitable land and seemingly small decisions like this made by municipal governing bodies will have an incredibly large impact on the future of our planet.*

- Samantha Harvey
- *It's very important to have clean water and we should do more to make sure it doesn't go wasted. Protecting species habitats should be a priority for Burlington.*
  - Abigale Robson
- *Better managed and cared for bike paths, gutter and roads for bicycles. Bigger investment a bus services*
  - Ben Simmons
- *All of our farm land is being eaten up by builders building homes and not keeping enough green space.*
  - Sharon Maoirat
- *Preserve green space along the waterfront especially for endangered species and waterfowl - stop the marina expansion at LaSalle and stop considering wild life as nuisances.*
  - Joan Urquhart
- *Preserving the incredible farm land of North Burlington is of the most critical importance. Urban expansion and massive mansions are destroying and wasting it.*
  - Christopher Bird
- *You need to invest in the future in order to have a safe, enjoyable life for the citizens. Once these green spaces, swans, farmland are gone there is NO getting them back.*
  - J.K. Genis
- *Securing farmland is a huge concern because Ontario is lucky to have some of the best farmland globally and should be preserved.*
  - Conor Russell
- *Connected Cities and "the internet of things" even if we have to build a sub division in the middle of nowhere it would be nice to see "communities" developed. There is no point sticking to status quo - the cost effective approach - we need to have integrated development incorporating diversity and family diverted scenarios. "Cookie cutter" in a farm field has to go.*
  - Josh Siteman
- *I am concerned about the planet my granddaughter will be inheriting from my generation. I would love to see Burlington take the lead of the 5 issues I've supported and set an example for other communities to take action by our side.*
  - Susan Black
- *Let's leave Burlington green - leaving a great legacy for generations to come! Proudly organic!*
  - Linda Hayes
- *Set a new standard in city planning for all other municipalities to follow. Be a leader in a sustainable, natural, healthy, and geonomic environment. Be innovative in town approach.*
  - Michelle Lokun
- *With more seniors then ever in this area we need to preserve space that can be enjoyed - green space - especially the LaSalle Park. This place is currently enjoyed by all. To ruin it by expanding the marina would be only favourable to the wealthy who can afford a boat.*
  - Laurier Mantel

- *The City must ensure that urban sprawl does not pass the 407. The city is becoming more built up around Hwy 5 but that must be limit. The escarpment is too valuable to be eaten up by sprawl.*  
– Aysha Bayes
- *Public transit need to be a priority so we can reduce emissions. More efficient routes, consistent availability for those working in the city of Burlington and affordable for low income families. Affordable rates will allow families save for greener vehicles.*  
- Shazia Wall
- *Intensification will bring more people into the existing boundaries of the City and increasing considerably the number with little or no green space of their own. This means that more public green space be created from a dwindling supply of land. A long term plan is essential to ensure that further green space is acquired in proximity to those areas where intensification is underway or planned.*  
–David McKay