

Mayoral Candidate: Marianne Meed Ward



Question 1		Flood Infrastructure & Stormwater: Burlington has faced repeated severe flooding, including the 2024 storm that impacted over <u>1,600</u> homes and businesses. Will you support accelerating the City's stormwater planning, flood-mapping and infrastructure investments needed to reduce the risk and impacts of future flooding?
Response:	Yes	After the 2014 flood and the 2024 storm, protecting homes from flooding is a priority. We've increased stormwater and flood-protection funding through our dedicated infrastructure levy, from about \$5.2 million in 2025 to about \$7.9 million in 2026, for culvert, creek and ditch work. I'll support accelerating flood mapping and stormwater planning so we invest where the risk is highest, and keep pressing the province and Ottawa to fund climate-resilient infrastructure. A dollar spent on prevention saves many more in damage, insurance claims and repairs down the road.
Question 2		Transit Investment & Emission Reductions: With vehicle emissions generating <u>over 40%</u> of Burlington's greenhouse gases, improving and expanding public transit is central to reaching the target to be a net carbon neutral community by 2050. Will you commit to supporting increased funding investments and service enhancements – such as fleet electrification, increased frequency, route reliability, and network connectivity – to make transit a competitive alternative to driving?
Response:	Yes	Every full bus takes cars off our roads, cutting emissions and congestion. I've supported more buses and drivers, both conventional and Handivan, and championed free transit for seniors, low income residents and youth evenings and weekends. We're directing growth to GO stations with multiple transit options and communities amenities within walking distance. I support electrification, and a pilot for on-demand transit to supplement fixed routes. Transit is central to our first-ever congestion management plan.
Question 3		Climate Equity & Vulnerable Communities: While every resident in the city of Burlington will be impacted by climate change, not every resident will be impacted equally. The most vulnerable residents who are facing financial, social, mental and physical barriers will experience compounding effects and bear disproportionate impacts of the

		climate crisis. (Burlington Climate Plan 2026-2031) Will you commit to supporting the budget investments required for the implementation of the City's climate mitigation, adaptation, and emergency response plans to protect these disproportionately impacted communities, and all residents?
Response:	Yes	Climate impacts fall hardest on those least able to cope: seniors, low-income residents, and people living alone or with health challenges. That's why I supported the Burlington Climate Plan 2026-2031, which puts equity at its centre. I'll support the investments needed to deliver it, including cooling and warming centres, emergency response, flood protection and tree canopy in the neighbourhoods that need it most. We'll fund it responsibly through each budget, alongside federal and provincial climate programs, so protecting residents doesn't come at the expense of affordability.
Question 4		Biodiversity Action Plan: Burlington currently has no municipal Action Plan to protect and care for local nature, and yet the implications of the biodiversity crisis (such as the acceleration of invasive species) continue to grow. Will you commit to directing staff to develop a Biodiversity Action Plan by 2028 with associated budget investments required for its implementation?
Response:	Yes	Protecting nature is part of what makes Burlington special, from the Escarpment to our creeks, woodlots and waterfront. We're already protecting our greenspace, rural lands and urban forest, and I'm fighting to save the greenspace at Millcroft. A Biodiversity Action Plan would bring that work together, with clear targets on invasive species, habitat and natural heritage. I'd bring it to council for a 2028 plan that builds on our Urban Forest Master Plan and natural heritage system rather than duplicating them, with implementation funded through the budget process.
Question 5		Aggregate Moratorium: To safeguard Burlington's groundwater, air quality, and the Escarpment ecosystem, will you commit to support the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition's call for a provincial moratorium (temporary pause) on new and expanding aggregate operations? (The purpose of a moratorium is to allow time to conduct a broad consultation process, with Indigenous Nations, affected communities, independent experts and scientists, to chart an improved path forward.)
Response:	Yes	I've stood with residents against quarry expansion on the Escarpment twice, and I'll continue to fight for a review of the Tribunal approval of the recent quarry expansion, because our groundwater, air quality and a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve are at stake. Today's system leaves communities fighting expansions one application at a time, at great cost. I support a pause on new and expanding operations, verifying we have enough aggregate in existing mines, and allowing real consultation with Indigenous Nations, affected communities and independent experts. I'll also join other communities through TAPMO, securing fairness for aggregate producing municipalities.

Question 6		Green Building & Development Standards: Provincial legislation <u>restricts municipalities' authority to mandate green building performance</u> beyond the Ontario Building Code. Consistent with the City's <u>Horizon 2050 net -zero commitments</u> , will you proactively advocate for stronger energy-efficiency and sustainability standards in Burlington's new developments, with associated incentives, planning processes, and legal tools available to the City?
Response:	Yes	Provincial changes, including Bill 98, have limited what municipalities can require, but we shouldn't stop pushing. I'll advocate to the province, including through Ontario's Big City Mayors and AMO, to restore municipal authority to set stronger green building standards. Locally, we can use the tools we have: incentives, faster approvals for high-performance buildings, sustainable design guidelines, and leading by example in City buildings like the Robert Bateman Community Centre. We can also partner with builders, who are voluntarily implementing green standards above legislated requirements because it's good business.
Question 7		Accountable Reporting: To ensure all Council members receive staff reports that are consistently accountable to the City's <u>Horizon 2050 Vision and 25-year Strategic Plan</u> guiding principles, will you direct staff to adopt an environmental, social, and economic lens to all reports, starting 2027? (example: <u>UN Sustainable Development Goals Framework</u>)
Response:	Yes	Council makes better decisions when every report shows the full picture: environmental, social and financial. Our staff reports already include climate implications and alignment with our Strategic Plan, and I'd support strengthening that into a consistent sustainability lens across all reports, starting in 2027. I'd bring this to council for a decision rather than direct it on my own, because it should be adopted collaboratively. It should be practical and clear, so it improves decisions without adding needless cost or delay.
Question 8		Personal Commitment: What are some actions you personally take to minimize your environmental footprint?
Response:		We walk and take transit whenever possible, for both short and longer trips. I use a hybrid vehicle and rarely need gas. We recycle both organics and other materials, and purchase refillable containers (for example, household soaps) to reduce waste. We donate materials we no longer can use, rather than throw them out, and shop from thrift stores regularly. We have a native garden rather than grass, and have planted two trees on our property.