

Ward 4 Candidate: Olivia Duke



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	Protecting homes, businesses and critical infrastructure from flooding is a core municipal responsibility. I support accelerating stormwater planning, updated flood mapping and targeted infrastructure investments based on risk, evidence and long-term value. As severe weather events become more frequent, Burlington must ensure that growth, road reconstruction, creek management and stormwater capacity are planned together. Investments should be prioritized transparently, with clear timelines, costs and measurable outcomes. Preventative infrastructure can reduce far greater costs to residents and taxpayers later, while making our neighbourhoods safer and more resilient.
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	Transit has to be reliable, convenient and competitive if we want more people to use it. I support targeted investments that improve frequency, route reliability, connectivity and accessibility, while continuing the transition to lower-emission vehicles where it is operationally and financially responsible. Funding decisions should be tied to ridership data, service standards and measurable outcomes so residents can see whether investments are improving the system. Better transit supports affordability, reduces congestion and emissions, and gives residents more practical transportation choices across Burlington and the Region.
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 resilience is also about protecting people. Seniors, lower-income households, people with disabilities and residents facing other barriers can be disproportionately affected by extreme heat, flooding, severe storms and service disruptions. I support appropriate investments in Burlington's climate adaptation, mitigation and emergency response plans, with priority given to measures that reduce risk and protect vulnerable residents. These investments should be evidence-based, coordinated with Regional and community partners, and accompanied by clear outcomes and accountability. Building resilience means ensuring every resident can remain safe when emergencies occur.
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	Burlington's natural areas, tree canopy, creeks and local ecosystems are important community assets and deserve a coordinated approach to protection and restoration. I would support directing staff to develop a Biodiversity Action Plan by 2028, including measurable priorities for invasive species, habitat protection, urban forestry and ecological restoration. The plan should build on existing City and Conservation Halton work, identify clear responsibilities and costs, and include measurable outcomes. Any associated investments should be prioritized through the budget process based on evidence, effectiveness and long-term value to residents.
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 support a temporary provincial moratorium on new and expanding aggregate operations while Ontario undertakes a comprehensive review with municipalities, Indigenous Nations, affected communities and independent experts. Burlington has seen first-hand the concerns surrounding aggregate expansion at Mount Nemo, including potential impacts on groundwater, the natural environment and surrounding communities. Aggregates remain necessary for housing and infrastructure, but decisions about new

		extraction must be based on demonstrated need, strong environmental protections and meaningful local input. A temporary pause provides an opportunity to ensure the provincial framework properly balances those responsibilities.
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 <u>City's 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	I support advocating for stronger energy-efficiency and sustainability standards in new development, while using the planning, incentive and legal tools available to the City today. Burlington should encourage buildings that are more efficient, resilient and less costly to operate over their lifetime, while also advocating to the Province for greater municipal authority where appropriate. Any local incentives or requirements should be practical, transparent and designed to avoid unnecessary delays or costs that undermine housing affordability. The goal should be better-performing buildings, lower emissions and long-term value for both residents and the community.
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 decisions should clearly consider environmental, social and economic impacts, especially where they relate to Burlington's long-term strategic goals. I support incorporating a consistent sustainability lens into staff reports beginning in 2027, provided it is practical, proportionate and useful for decision-making. The objective should be to help Council understand trade-offs, long-term costs and community impacts, not to create unnecessary administrative burden. A clear and standardized reporting framework can strengthen accountability, improve transparency and make it easier for residents to see how individual decisions align with Horizon 2050.
Question 8		Personal Commitment: What are some actions you personally take to minimize your environmental footprint?
Response:		I try to make practical choices in my daily life that reduce my environmental footprint. My family and I walk or cycle when it makes sense, and I have also used Burlington Transit, although like many residents I still rely on a vehicle for trips where distance, timing or connections make other options impractical. I value our parks, trails and natural spaces and believe individual choices matter, but they also need to be supported by good public infrastructure. For me, sustainability is about making better choices where possible while supporting systems that make those choices easier for everyone.