

Mayor Guthrie and members of Council:

As I read the staff report on Bills 109 and 23, there are repeated recommendations to seek financial support from the Province to cover Development Charge shortfalls created by these bills.

I ask that these recommendations NOT be included in feedback to the Province. Instead, I ask that Council support and promote the principle that ***Growth Should Pay for Growth***.

Early calculations suggest that this legislation will result in a cash transfusion from citizens to developers of \$1 billion annually. There is only one taxpayer. I am not interested in enriching developers, whether it is through my property taxes or my Provincial taxes.

This is a brazen cash grab by the development industry and should not be enabled at any level of government.

Sincerely,
Susan Watson

Mayor Guthrie and Members of Council:

Perhaps one of the most cynical things about Bill 23 is that it purports to address the need for "affordable housing", when in fact, the opposite is true. Bill 23 will further constrain the supply of truly affordable housing by removing controls on the demolition and conversion of current rental stock and by removing fees for housing services provided by municipalities from Development Charge formulas.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario created a document which proposes housing solutions at all levels of government: ***Blueprint for Action: An integrated approach to address the Ontario housing crisis:***

<https://www.amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2022/A%20Blueprint%20for%20Action%20-%20An%20Integrated%20Approach%20To%20Address%20The%20Ontario%20Housing%20Crisis%20Revised%202022-03-11.pdf>

I urge you to read the AMO paper.

I also contest that if Doug Ford were truly committed to solving the housing supply and affordability crisis, there are at least 4 timely and relatively low-cost actions he could initiate immediately.

1) **Fix the Landlord and Tenant Board:**

Many landlords are selling rental units, or simply not renting them out because they are afraid of ending up with tenants who will use current hearing delays to avoid paying rent. It now takes 8 - 10 months before applicants even receive notice about a hearing date, even in situations of fraud:

Month-long delays at Ontario Tribunal crushing small landlords under debt from unpaid rent:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/delays-ontario-ltb-crushing-small-landlords-1.6630256>

2) **Provide 50,000 LTC beds.**

As of May 21, 2021, there were 38,000 people on the waitlist for Long-Term-Care. These people no longer want to "age-in-place". In fact, for many, their needs can no longer be met at home. Many of these people are living in multi-bedroom family homes which would be released onto the market for sale or rental if they could move into LTC.

Moreover, while the LTC Act provides for spouses to be housed in LTC with their partners, even if they would not otherwise be qualified, in practice this is not happening. Adding another 12,000 beds would allow spouses to live together in LTC and release much-needed housing onto the market.

During the recent election, Mayoral candidate William Albabish talked about the case of his 94-year-old neighbour who lives alone in a multi-bedroom house. The man wants to live with his wife, but currently has to drive from Guelph to Fergus every day to visit his wife at Wellington Terrace.

LTC housing is efficient and compact. Providing seniors with the care they need and deserve would also remove a bottleneck in the housing market.

3) Introduce a Province-wide vacancy tax

In the midst of a housing crisis, there should be no vacant housing anywhere. BC introduced a Province-wide vacancy tax which started at 1%, moved to 2% and is now rising to 5%. Together with the Foreign Buyers tax, BC's speculation tax released 20,000 condo units into the market in Vancouver.

BC is also investing revenues from the tax in affordable housing:

Speculation and vacancy tax will help housing affordability in new communities:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022FIN0028-001137>

4) Fund land trusts, co-ops and public housing which will provide truly affordable housing in perpetuity.

Grants and subsidies for housing which revert to market prices after 25 years are rip-offs for citizens. No private-sector developer would invest millions in an asset that would have no value after 25 years.

Public dollars need to be invested in land trusts, co-ops and public housing which will provide rent-geared-to-income affordable housing in perpetuity.

Best,
Susan Watson

Mayor Guthrie and Members of Council:

This video features data generated for Guelph by Urban3:

Suburbia is Subsidized: Here's the math

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Nw6qyyrTel&t=18s>

The key message is that low-density sprawl is subsidized by more densely built areas.

The implication for Bill 23 is that Guelph and Ontario citizens will not just be fleeced for \$1 billion annually in infrastructure costs, we will be saddling future generations with financially unsustainable sprawl foisted on us by Doug Ford.

I urge you to take 10 minutes to watch this video.

Sincerely,
Susan Watson