



DOWNTOWN CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO

Monday, December 18, 2023

Re: Motion - Exploring the potential for affordable housing units to be built above parking spaces in city-owned parking lots.

Mayor and Council,

On behalf of the Downtown Cambridge BIA, we would like to express our support of Councillor Hamilton's motion to ask City and Regional staff to explore the potential for affordable housing units to be built above parking spaces in city-owned parking lots near the core areas.

We applaud this motion's creativity and forward-thinking in addressing this complex and challenging issue. Making the air rights above parking lots available to non-profit developers for a nominal price to create affordable and attainable housing is an altruistic move that shows our City council's leadership and service to our community.

By passing this motion, you are ensuring the necessary analysis to determine this innovative idea's viability and complexity so that the Council can make an informed decision knowing it can be accomplished and with minimum expense to the taxpayer.

Creating all housing types in our community is essential during the current housing affordability and supply crisis. As a BIA, we are particularly concerned about the need for more affordable and attainable housing near the core areas of Cambridge. Employees, owners and customers of downtown businesses need housing choices that allow them to live and work in proximity to our businesses.

While we recognize that parking is important to downtown businesses and their patrons, we also acknowledge that finding new ways to bring people to our core areas is critical to sustaining a healthy urban economy. Preserving parking while building affordable housing units above existing lots may very well be the solution to satisfying both.

We urge Council to put their full support behind exploring this idea to show the community and our neighbouring municipalities that they are serious about and committed to building more affordable and attainable housing in Cambridge.

Brian Kennedy

Brian Kennedy,
Executive Director
Downtown Cambridge BIA