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**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca); Office of the Mayor <[Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca)>; Danko, John-Paul <[John-Paul.Danko@hamilton.ca](mailto:John-Paul.Danko@hamilton.ca)>; Francis, Matt <[Matt.Francis@hamilton.ca](mailto:Matt.Francis@hamilton.ca)>

**Subject:** Motion to keep parking spaces while building affordable housing ABOVE them, being passed locally

*(I kindly ask your clerk to distribute this email to all of council, as I am currently forced to use my phone).*

Good afternoon Mayor Horwath and members of Hamilton City Council,

I am a city councillor in Cambridge, Ontario. Recently, I brought a motion to council requesting the city explore the construction of affordable housing ABOVE the spaces in municipal parking lots. This retains most of the parking spaces, while using the space above it for housing. By retaining the land, the city can then set the terms of housing/rent, thereby making the housing truly affordable, while retaining ownership.

<https://www.cambridgetoday.ca/local-news/councillors-ambitious-affordable-housing-pitch-lauded-by-urban-design-expert-7945899>

This concept was strongly endorsed by Canada's Research Chair in Urban Planning, Dr. Brian Doucet, as well as many other academics and non-profit developers such as Beyond Homes, and Habitat for Humanity.

Our BIA and local businesses came out strongly in favour, because the spaces are retained, while creating more density in the core. Church groups, non-profits, academics, and others, all came out strongly in favour of this idea.

[The City of Kitchener](#), and [the Region of Waterloo](#) also passed motions based on this concept: to utilize public/municipal assets (parking lots) as spaces to build housing above. Keep the majority of the parking lot; utilize the empty airspace above it.

The idea of building a small apartment building 'on pillars' is normal in Cambridge (Galt), since we cannot dig into bedrock near the Grand River. There is nothing unique about the design of the building itself; what is unique is using a city asset (parking lot) to create affordable housing above it.

Here is the latest discussion Dr. Doucet and I had about this concept, on 'Inside the Village': <https://www.guelphtoday.com/insidethevillage/inside-the-village-a-no-brainer-idea-to-help-ease-our-housing-crisis-8309412>

I should also add that the [Mayor of Guelph is considering using his strong Mayor powers to construct 'housing over parking' as well.](#)

I apologize is this email is coming late in your development planning process and deliberations, but I only heard of the difficulties in Stoney Creek re: 'parking vs. housing' yesterday. What building housing ABOVE parking represents, is a win-win for all.

I am happy to speak with anyone that wishes to learn more about the concept, questions I commonly receive, resources, etc.

I wish you all the best,

Dr. Scott Hamilton  
Ward 7 Councillor, City of Cambridge

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