



***MEDIA RELEASE***

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

## **Mayor presents to Standing Committee on regional governance review**

(Barrie, ON) – Mayor Alex Nuttall presented today to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy. The Committee is conducting a study on regional governance as overseen by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Mayor Nuttall provided the committee with an update on Barrie’s housing targets and highlighted why Barrie requires additional employment lands so more residents can have jobs closer to home.

“Barrie is uniquely positioned to provide the services and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of growing businesses,” said Mayor Alex Nuttall. “We are ready and open for business to meet the demand for employment growth in our region and support major local employers. As a single tier municipality, Barrie can continue to be a strong partner for the province and solve area problems for business expansion and growth and get housing built. The City of Barrie as a single tier municipality can achieve all provincial direction—all that is missing is industrial land.”

Barrie is on track to exceed the provincial target of 23,000 homes by 2031. Since January 1, 2023, the City of Barrie has had 1,850 housing starts—which exceeds the City’s annual target by more than 10%. The Municipal Benchmarking Study released by BILD named Barrie as the overall best municipality across the GTA for getting new housing developments approved for two straight reports. A major reason for Barrie’s first place standing was due to our fast and streamlined processes as a single tier separated city with only one layer of governance and approval.

At the meeting, the Mayor presented the committee with hundreds of letters of support from Barrie businesses who agree the city needs more employment lands. He also indicated he has letters of support for the need for more industrial land in Barrie from every Mayor of Barrie dating back to 1988.

“Barrie is experiencing demand from existing employers who want to expand and grow,” Nuttall added. “We are just constrained by the availability of shovel-ready and available lands.”

In November 2022, the provincial government indicated it was exploring appointing regional facilitators in Ontario’s fastest growing regions to eliminate unnecessary or duplicative barriers preventing towns and cities from hitting their housing targets. In September 2023, Minister Paul Calandra announced that the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy would take over the work originally proposed for facilitators in the six regions, including Simcoe County.

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