

September 27, 2023

Dear Barrie City Council,

As organizations providing shelter and outreach support to those experiencing homelessness in Barrie, we are writing to say no thank you, we do not want to be associated with your “Say No to Panhandling” campaign in any way.

As CAO Prowse noted at the Public Meeting held on Tuesday, September 19th, this campaign, a result of council directives in the May 17 motion to address homelessness, is not primarily about redirecting money to people who need it via charities and nonprofits. This campaign is about deterring panhandling.

We do not wish to be associated with a campaign that removes autonomy from people who want help or people who want to give help. If you had asked us first, we would have recommended against putting any of the funds that Council set aside to address homelessness toward this measure.

We are grateful to the many caring community members who support our organizations with their time, talents, and resources. And also, we want nothing to do with stifling community efforts to take care of each other and provide direct support to our neighbours to meet their basic needs.

In solidarity with our unhoused neighbours,

