

CITY HALL  
70 COLLIER STREET  
TEL. (705) 792-7900  
FAX. (705) 739-4265

P.O. BOX 400  
BARRIE, ONTARIO  
L4M 4T5  
[www.barrie.ca](http://www.barrie.ca)



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF BARRIE

Mayor's Office

The Honourable Prime Minister Mark Carney  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Barrie to request immediate federal action on the growing crisis of homelessness and unsafe encampments in our community. On September 9, 2025, I declared a State of Emergency in Barrie. The issues driving this declaration are real and urgent: murder, theft, weapons in tents, open drug use, overdoses, needles, and general lawlessness.

In recent months, we have experienced a double homicide, multiple fires, overdoses, assaults, environmental contamination of waterways, and public health risks from human waste and discarded needles. These conditions are unsafe for both the vulnerable people living in tents and the broader community.

Encampments are not a solution to homelessness. They expose residents to danger, strain municipal resources, and erode public safety. Municipalities alone cannot resolve these issues. Healthcare, mental health, and justice are federal and provincial responsibilities, and local councils cannot compensate for systemic failures in these areas.

Compassionate intervention is needed, even if it requires using the Notwithstanding Clause. The first encampment removed under Barrie's state of emergency was at the courthouse. Of the 44 individuals living there, 39 have accepted supports and housing. However, compassionate intervention is needed when individuals are no longer able to

make decision themselves, especially when they are engaging in substance abuse and have become a long-term threat to themselves or the community. Fourteen Ontario Big City Mayors, including myself, have already called for this. As a society, we already intervene without consent when administering Naloxone during overdoses. Why wait for tragedy?

I respectfully request that the Government of Canada:

1. Advance bail and sentencing reforms to ensure repeat offenders who pose risks in encampments are held accountable.
2. Intervene where appropriate in court challenges that prevent municipalities from enforcing by-laws intended to protect public safety.
3. Expand federal investments in emergency shelters, supportive housing, mental health treatment, and addiction services to give municipalities safe alternatives when encampments are removed.
4. Enable systemic reforms that improve coordination among federal, provincial, and municipal governments, ensuring law enforcement, social services, and public health work together effectively.
5. Conduct a full review of judicial rulings that restrict municipal authority, particularly regarding encampments and public safety.
6. Work with provinces and municipalities to provide clear authority for local governments to regulate and remove unsafe encampments, particularly those near well heads, public parks, waterways, and critical infrastructure.

The crisis in Barrie reflects a national problem. Municipalities cannot address it alone. Strong federal leadership is required to ensure that vulnerable citizens receive treatment and housing, while everyday Canadians are protected from the escalating risks posed by unsafe encampments.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss these matters directly. Please contact my office at [officeofthemayor@barrie.ca](mailto:officeofthemayor@barrie.ca) to arrange a meeting.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Nuttall', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Alex Nuttall City of Barrie