



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, May 9, 2025

City of Barrie and Township of Springwater Develop Shared Principles for Boundary Adjustment and Cross Border Servicing

Barrie, ON – The City of Barrie and the Township of Springwater met following direction from Springwater Council to resume discussions. The meeting focused on shared priorities and mutual commitments related to servicing and boundary adjustments that benefit both communities.

Mayor Nuttall and Mayor Coughlin met to develop the key principles of a framework reflecting a shared commitment to advance growth and collaboration. The meeting represents a critical step towards addressing the future need for residential and employment lands, supporting long-term economic growth and fostering collaboration for sustainable development in alignment with Provincial priorities.

Under the proposed principles, the City of Barrie has offered to extend municipal water and wastewater services to a portion of the Township of Springwater. In exchange for the servicing, the Township of Springwater would transfer supplementary lands to the City of Barrie for long-term residential and employment growth, as per the attached map. The proposed arrangement and associated compensation would be modeled similar to the St. Thomas/Central Elgin boundary adjustment agreement executed in 2024.

A key pillar of the framework is a commitment to environmental sustainability by confirming the Mayor of Springwater as a member of the Little Lake Conservation Trust which will ensure the long-term preservation and protection of these lands.

"Mayor Nuttall and I met to develop draft principles for a possible agreement between our two communities. These draft principles reflect discussions of Springwater Council this term and ensure overall benefit to Springwater Township. The principles include preserving and enhancing Little Lake conservation area, investments in Economic Development, cross border servicing and access to recreation for our residents. I agree with these proposed principles, and I am committed to bringing this back to Council and residents for discussion" stated Mayor Jennifer Coughlin, Township of Springwater.

"The development of these shared principles is a critical step forward on this important issue for our region," said Mayor Alex Nuttall. "We are running out of shovel-ready employment lands, which limits our ability to attract new businesses and create high-quality jobs for residents. These principles not only secure space for long-term, sustainable growth, but also reflects our shared vision with Springwater for a prosperous future for the region. This opportunity for Barrie to determine the use of our water and wastewater capacity in exchange for additional supply of employment and residential land is mutually beneficial to Barrie and Springwater and I look forward to securing more employment lands to create more jobs for our area."



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"Mayors know the needs of their communities best," said Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "I commend the City of Barrie and Township of Springwater on working together to deliver better results for the people they serve. I look forward to our continued collaboration as our government strengthens local governance and gives municipalities the tools they need to get shovels in the ground for critical infrastructure projects, faster" stated Minister Flack.

"Throughout this process I have encouraged local dialogue. This kind of partnership between the Mayors of Barrie and Springwater is how communities move forward in the collective best interest," said MPP Doug Downey. "By developing shared principles for growth and servicing, they're creating a local solution that supports the broader goals of housing, job creation, and smart planning for the region. This kind of collaboration is exactly what we need to see more of across Ontario."

Shared principles include:

- City of Barrie boundary expanded in exchange for water and wastewater servicing in defined area and compensation aligned to the St. Thomas/Central Elgin agreement;
- Formation of a joint economic development committee to support coordinated growth and investment strategies and dedicated economic development resources for the Township of Springwater;
- A collaborative approach to regional healthcare services will be pursued to ensure accessible care across both municipalities;
- A property tax phase-in program to ease the transition for affected property owners;
- Access to City of Barrie recreational facilities, programs and waterfront parking passes ;
- Confirmation of the Mayor of Springwater as a member on the Little Lake Conservation Trust;
- A request for the Ontario Energy Board to consider an alignment of the Alectra service area.

This matter will be brought forward to the Township of Springwater Council in the coming weeks.

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