

December 8, 2025

Mayor Alex Nuttall
City of Barrie
70 Collier Street
Barrie, ON L4M 4T5

Re: Comments on the 2026 City of Barrie Budget

Dear Mayor Nuttall and Members of Barrie Council,

On behalf of the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB), representing more than 70,000 REALTOR® members serving the Greater Toronto Area and Simcoe County, we are pleased to submit the following comments on the City's 2026 budget. Our members assist thousands of buyers, sellers, landlords and renters in Barrie and Simcoe County every year and are deeply invested in the vitality of your community.

The 2026 Barrie Budget is being discussed during a period of housing supply and affordability challenges across Simcoe County and the broader GTA. Rapid population growth, combined with high construction costs and government-imposed charges, has pushed the average home price in Barrie above \$800,000 while rents remain elevated, placing homeownership and rental options out of reach for many residents and risking the loss of construction-sector jobs.

TRREB commends the City's ongoing commitment to housing supply and infrastructure investment. We support initiatives to accelerate approvals and expand residential capacity along transit corridors, in preparation for Barrie's projected growth to over 220,000 residents by 2031. TRREB urges Council to take bold action in the 2026 Budget by prioritizing two measures.

First, Barrie should reduce and restructure development charges (DCs), which currently exceed \$109,000 per single/semi-detached home and remain among the highest barriers to new supply in the region. Second, the City should create the conditions to build more homes faster by speeding up approvals, investing in enabling infrastructure, and quickly unlocking lands for development. These steps will deliver more attainable housing choices for local families and individuals.

Lower Development Charges (DCs) to Boost Supply

High municipal and regional development charges, combined with other government fees, add tens of thousands of dollars to the cost of every new home in Barrie, pricing out young individuals and families and discouraging the construction of purpose-built rental and family-sized units. To improve affordability and accelerate supply, TRREB recommends that Barrie Council explore other fiscal measures to reduce DC rates across other housing types, while ensuring they are fully offset by contributions from senior levels of government.

Second, Council should explore incentives for builders to construct larger, family-oriented units (2+ bedrooms). This would fulfill councils stated goal of delivering homes that meet the needs of growing households.

An incentive could involve a DC-based solution or other measures that will expand the variety of housing options for residents, ensuring that residents are able to access larger sized units. This shift would support Barrie's long-term planning objectives, enhance affordability by increasing the supply of appropriately sized housing, and more accurately reflect the principles of fairness, proportionality, and growth.

Unlocking Housing Potential Through Transit & Infrastructure Investments

Barrie is poised to benefit from major GO Transit expansion, Allandale Waterfront and Barrie South stations, and the planned extension of frequent rail service. Building more homes, especially missing-middle and multi-residential projects near these stations and along key corridors is essential to reducing car dependency, easing traffic congestion, and keeping housing costs down.

TRREB strongly recommends that the City integrate transit-supportive, as-of-right zoning around GO stations and future transit hubs in 2026. Pre-zoning these areas for townhomes, mid-rises, and apartments would eliminate years of site-by-site rezoning delays, unlock thousands of new homes where infrastructure already exists, and allow Barrie to fully capitalize on provincial transit investments while meeting and exceeding its housing targets.

In summary, TRREB calls for a 2026 budget that combines fiscal responsibility with decisive leadership on housing supply and affordability. We are available to collaborate with the City through ongoing dialogue, data sharing, and joint advocacy with senior governments to help build a complete and more prosperous Barrie.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the residents and future of Barrie.

Sincerely,



Elechia Barry-Sproule
President