



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**Thursday, May 13, 2021**

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

### **City files injunction against organizer of ongoing gatherings**

(Barrie, ON) This morning, the City of Barrie issued a Notice of Application with the Ontario Superior Court of Justice for an injunction to restrain the organizer from organizing, hosting and participating in any further gatherings on City property. The gatherings that have been held are contrary to the Provincial Stay-at-Home Order, provincial legislation and regulations, the City's COVID-19 Emergency Measures By-law, and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's public health guidelines.

"We share the frustration of our community," said Mayor Jeff Lehman. "These individuals continue to blatantly disregard the law and public health orders and their actions threaten our efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. We will continue to look at all options to hold the organizers accountable for their actions."

The City does not condone these gatherings and has not provided permission to use its lands. The organizers have not obtained permits required for the use of City property and regardless, the City would not be issuing them given the health orders/regulations.

To deter these gatherings, Mayor Jeff Lehman issued an emergency order on April 29 to close and fence off Meridian Place. Barrie Police have attended these gatherings over the last several weeks and have issued over 20 tickets under the Reopening Ontario Act, with fines totaling over \$18,000. In addition, there have been 7 summons issued, with court dates pending. More tickets could be issued up to 30 days after the offence and summons to appear before the courts could be served up to 6 months after the date of the offence.

Municipal enforcement staff do not attend these gatherings because they are not resourced, equipped or trained to handle this type of large gathering. However, Enforcement Services staff are reviewing information provided by parties who witnessed the gathering, to pursue further charges under the City's municipal by-laws.

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