

Mayor Paul Lefebvre  
City of Greater Sudbury  
Tom Davies Square  
200 Brady Street  
Sudbury, ON, P3A 5P3

November 4, 2024

Dear Mayor Lefebvre,

[mayor@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:mayor@greatersudbury.ca)

**Re: A Collaborative Approach to Community Safety and Support: Advocating for Housing and Health Investments in Sudbury**

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the recent proposal to invoke the notwithstanding clause as a measure to address homelessness encampments in Greater Sudbury. We urge you and the City Council to reconsider the allocation of \$170 million for a new police station and redirect these funds to support Sudbury's homeless population by investing in sustainable housing and mental health resources. Notably, [the petition](#) to redirect these funds has already garnered over 400 signatures as of the date of writing this letter, reflecting significant public support for a different approach.

The decision to seek an override of judicial authority through the notwithstanding clause poses a troubling precedent for our city. This measure would negate essential protections under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, specifically those highlighted in [Justice Valente's recent ruling](#), which rightfully prioritizes the rights and safety of individuals living in encampments. While the complexities of homelessness and addiction demand urgent attention, resorting to tools that bypass foundational civil liberties could harm the most vulnerable members of our community rather than offering them the structured, compassionate care they require.

Moreover, it is important to note that invoking the notwithstanding clause directly contradicts the [City Council motion passed on August 13, 2024](#), which committed to exploring comprehensive solutions to homelessness that prioritize the dignity and rights of all residents. This motion reflects our community's values and the understanding that effective solutions require collaboration and respect for human rights, not measures that undermine them. The Council's resolution to approach the homelessness crisis with compassion and systemic change should guide our actions moving forward.

Greater Sudbury's homelessness crisis continues to escalate, with growing encampments reflecting a scarcity of adequate shelter and social support systems. The unhoused population in

Sudbury is disproportionately Indigenous, Black, and/or racialized, underscoring the need for solutions that address the systemic issues contributing to this disparity.

Redirecting the proposed \$170 million earmarked for a new police station toward sustainable housing and wraparound services would be a much more effective, humane, and cost-efficient solution. Studies have shown that Housing First initiatives yield positive outcomes both in terms of human impact and city finances, as evidenced by the many Canadian cities that have successfully prioritized housing over policing.

A strong commitment to mental health care, addiction services, and affordable housing is essential if we are to make meaningful progress. This approach aligns with the community-based solutions [you mentioned](#), which seek to address the underlying causes of homelessness. By reallocating these funds, Greater Sudbury can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that protects all residents' dignity and rights, while also addressing community safety in a sustainable and equitable manner.

This is an opportunity for Greater Sudbury to lead by example and to prioritize people over infrastructure. We urge you to abandon the proposal to invoke the notwithstanding clause and instead champion an approach that invests directly in housing and social services. Such an initiative would not only support those currently experiencing homelessness but also reflect the compassionate values we uphold as a community.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter. We look forward to seeing a city policy that prioritizes the well-being and rights of all Sudbury residents.

Sincerely,

The undersigned:

**Black Lives Matter - Sudbury**

**Réseau ACCESS Network**

**Fierté Laurentian Pride**

**Indigenous Students Circle, Sudbury Campus, Laurentian University**

**Sudbury Workers Education and Advocacy Centre**

**Coalition for a Liveable Sudbury**

**SWANS (Sex Workers Advisory Network Sudbury)**

**Beth Mairs, Mairs & Associates**

**Gary Kinsman, Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Laurentian University, former member of the Sudbury Coalition Against Poverty**

**Sarah Gartshore, Zaagi'idiwin Collective**

CC:

*Councillor Signoretti, Ward 1 ([mark.signoretti@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:mark.signoretti@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Benoit, Ward 2, ([eric.benoit@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:eric.benoit@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Brabant, Ward 3, ([michel.brabant@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:michel.brabant@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Fortin, Ward 4, ([pauline.fortin@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:pauline.fortin@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Parent, Ward 5 ([mike.parent@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:mike.parent@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Lapierre, Ward 6 ([rene.lapierre@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:rene.lapierre@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Labbée, Ward 7 ([natalie.labbee@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:natalie.labbee@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Sizer, Ward 8 ([al.sizer@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:al.sizer@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor McIntosh, Ward 9 ([deb.mcintosh@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:deb.mcintosh@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Cormier, Ward 10, ([fern.cormier@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:fern.cormier@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Leduc, Ward 11, ([bill.leduc@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:bill.leduc@greatersudbury.ca))*

*Councillor Landry-Altmann, Ward 12, ([joscelyne.landry-altmann@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:joscelyne.landry-altmann@greatersudbury.ca))*