



P: (705) 328-0905 64 Lindsay St S.  
TF: (866) 520-2689 Lindsay, Ontario  
F: (705) 328-3547 K9V 2M2  
[www.apch.ca](http://www.apch.ca)

Monday, March 24, 2025

Municipal Council  
City Of Kawartha Lakes  
26 Francis Street  
P.O. Box 9000  
Lindsay, ON  
K9V 4R5

Dear Municipal Council Members,

Subject: Strong Support for a Human-Rights and Housing-Focused Approach to Encampment Response

On behalf of A Place Called Home, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for the adoption of a human-rights based and housing-focused approach to responding to encampments in our community. As an organization that works directly with individuals experiencing homelessness, we understand that this issue is far from simple, and requires a thoughtful, compassionate response that addresses both immediate needs and long-term solutions.

A human-rights based approach ensures that those living in encampments are treated with dignity and respect, and it provides an opportunity for collaboration with local organizations, healthcare providers, and law enforcement to offer necessary resources and support. This is particularly critical for individuals who are often facing multiple challenges, including mental health issues, substance use, trauma, and lack of affordable housing.

At the core of our belief is the understanding that the lack of stable, permanent housing is one of the primary drivers of homelessness. As such, a housing-focused response is crucial to any long-term solution. A focus on housing-first principles means prioritizing access to safe, permanent housing for individuals, without requiring them to first “earn” it through sobriety or other barriers. It means ensuring that every person in an encampment has a real pathway out of homelessness—one that leads them to a safe, stable, and supportive home.

While emergency shelter services like ours provide a critical safety net, they are only one part of the solution. What is most needed is a significant commitment to building more affordable housing and expanding supportive housing options that are accessible to those with complex needs. We firmly believe that by ensuring individuals have access to permanent housing, we can address homelessness in a sustainable and compassionate way, while also preventing the negative health, safety, and social consequences that often arise from encampment living.

By adopting a human-rights based, housing-focused approach, we can work together to ensure that people experiencing homelessness have the support they need not only for today, but for the future. This approach offers a path out of encampments and toward a stable life, free from the trauma and insecurity of life on the streets.

We stand ready to collaborate with the Municipal Council, local government, law enforcement, housing advocates, and other stakeholders to ensure that our community’s response to encampments reflects both compassion and a focus on providing real, sustainable housing solutions. We urge you to adopt policies that prioritize housing-first models, which we know to be the most effective way to end homelessness.

**Board of Directors**

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Rooted in a firm belief in human rights we support a compassionate response to neighbours who live in homeless encampments that prioritizes the safety of both the inhabitants and the broader public. Together with our civic and agency partners we encourage a flexible and adaptable approach to encampment residents within a spirit of broad collaboration and we support this policy because it echoes the key values we stand for.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing to work together to create a safer, healthier, and more inclusive community for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Angela Ricciuti', is positioned above the typed name and contact information.

Angela Ricciuti  
Executive Director  
A Place Called Home  
[angela@apch.ca](mailto:angela@apch.ca)  
705-928-0639