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Susan McMillan
The Salvation Army
Territorial Headquarters for Canada and Bermuda
2 Overlea Boulevard
Toronto, Ontario M4H 1P4

May 8th 2018

Dear Commissioner McMillan,

We thank you for acknowledging our letters of May 1st 2018 and April 18th 2018.

While we appreciate your offer to have your local officials meet with us regarding the proposal of a new Salvation Army facility in Ottawa, we strongly believe that this issue merits the intervention of yourself and Salvation Army senior leadership.

In light of your organizations public comments suggesting you welcome and look forward to a renewed relationship with the Ottawa-Vanier community, we find your refusal to meet very troubling. Since the Planning Meeting of 14 November 2017, where Salvation Army representative Glenn van Gulik stated, "We could have done a better job consulting with the community and we're trying to make up for it," we are not aware of your organization taking any meaningful steps to implement this. Specifically, as far as we are aware, outside of City of Ottawa mandated meetings, your representatives have not meaningfully consulted with leaders of the Indigenous community, the local community associations, local womens' shelters, social service stakeholders or the business improvement area, all of which have a large stake in the success of any possible development.

As discussed in our earlier letter, the current situation is untenable for all involved and leads to significant instability in the Vanier and By-Ward Market areas. We reiterate that we cannot support the proposed development in its current form as it does not fall within the principles of a Housing First Approach. While this proposal may not be your direct responsibility, we believe it warrants your attention and consideration. A number of proposed changes have been discussed throughout the past year, each time they have been immediately dismissed without due consideration by the local officials within your organization. Offers of support from city, provincial and federal officials were deemed also deemed unnecessary by your organization.

I think you would agree that this situation has been a contentious one for the community which we jointly represent. We believe that it is imperative for our community to see your organization take a step forward (through its senior management) to meet with representatives to discuss ways in which this investment can be successful and have positive results for the vulnerable members of our community. Our belief is that by working together we have an opportunity to support the Salvation Army in developing a proposal that will support our city's most vulnerable not simply moving a facility from one neighborhood to another.

With all due respect, a further denial of our request and that of our community will be seen by us and our communities as a further unwillingness to engage in meaningful dialogue. Once again we believe that for an investment of this magnitude to be successful for all parties involved, the senior leadership of the Salvation Army must take concrete steps to regain the community's trust and support.

Sincerely,

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