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February 18, 2021

Helen Francis
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Dear Helen,

This letter will provide a response to the issues raised in our initial discussions last year as well as your follow up emails. While I am able to provide some defined answers, today, this note also anticipates a continued dialogue on several issues that you have raised on behalf of your board and the YMCA Northeastern Ontario organization.

The City of Greater Sudbury sees the YMCA as an important asset for our community, a longstanding and trusted partner and an anchor institution in the heart of the city. We are concerned about the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic, and other trends, is having on the YMCA and your future. The CGS would like to better understand the situation you face and is open to exploring ways that we might work together on longer term solutions. I have asked staff to follow up with you to initiate this work and Kevin Fowke, General Manager of Corporate Services, has agreed to take on the role as your single point of contact for our work together. Kevin will be follow up with you directly in the very near future.

I am able to address some of your issues specifically and will begin by indicating that I will support your request for relief from the accumulated parking debt. Given the challenges for all of us in the past year, and the actions that we have taken to date with regard to the parking file, I think it is reasonable to ask that the parking debt up to December 31, 2020, be brought to zero. Neither staff nor I is able to implement this forgiveness on a unilateral basis, so we have initiated a report to Council to secure the authority for this action. I anticipate it will be dealt with at the March 9 meeting of City Council.

Another issue that you raised in your correspondence is the need for additional and specific security with regard to the use of your building as a warming shelter for our downtown vulnerable population. I can say that we are prepared to cover the cost of this additional security and Tyler Campbell,

Director of Social Services, will be in touch very soon if he has not reached out already.

On a related note, we agree with your suggestion regarding the use of the Parkside Centre during the changeover period and wholeheartedly support the continued discussion of this option with their representatives. We cannot compel them to share in this work, however, and it does not appear that they are willing to seriously consider this approach at the current time.

I am aware that members of your team have been meeting with staff in our Leisure Services Division regarding a proposal for alternate service delivery for youth programming. Director of Leisure Services, Jeff Pafford, informs me that staff in the CGS Recreation Section are reviewing the information provided recently and will be consulting with the Community Services Committee of Council on this option in the next few months.

We know that there is also interest from the YMCA to explore some form of partnership or alternative service delivery model for aquatic facilities. Laurentian University has also approached the CGS with a similar request. At the same time, the City faces its own challenges with aging municipal pools, demographic changes, uneven geographic distribution, and a proposal for a new therapeutic and leisure facility. The operational models of all three aquatics providers are significantly different and it is not immediately clear how these might come together to serve the full community. As we continue to examine the City's approach to pools and aquatics, we are interested in the continued discussions with Laurentian and the YMCA about a sustainable community approach to aquatic service delivery.

Helen, I trust that this letter provides some answers for your questions and also the assurance of the City of Greater Sudbury's continued interest in the health and sustainability of our community's YMCA. You have our commitment to continue to work with you and your team to identify and pursue mutually beneficial opportunities that can help to stabilize the YMCA's future and deliver value and enhanced quality of life for the citizens of Greater Sudbury. Staff have agreed to keep me informed of their work on a regular basis but you and your Board Chair should not hesitate to reach out to my office directly at any time.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Bigger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Bigger
Mayor, City of Greater Sudbury