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Executive Committee  
Attn: Frances Pritchard  
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City of Toronto

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**Re: EX24.8 Future of the Three Major Civic Theatres - Directions Resulting from the Request for Expressions of Interest No. 9101-12-7008**

Two of the three civic theatres discussed in this Report are in the St Lawrence area (The Sony Centre and the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts).

We are pleased to see that the Report recommends that the City “recognize the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts as a community cultural asset” and hope that we may be able to work with City staff and the management of the Centre to develop a sustainable business plan for the valuable asset to the City in general and our local community in particular.

Concerning the Sony Centre, however, we are concerned to see that the report recommends:

“City Council authorize the City Manager to work with City staff to determine how to structure a potential divestment of the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, and report back to Council with a proposed process and guidelines that:

- a. include allowance for potential adaptive reuse and other innovative strategies for sustained use; and
- b. are subject to existing zoning and heritage by-laws governing land use and the building, and take into consideration recent capital improvements.”

While the St Lawrence Neighbourhood Association appreciates that the City has severe budget pressures we are extremely disappointed by this recommendation, in particular the mention of “adaptive reuse”. The Sony Centre has recently been renovated at great cost and it provides a wonderful (and beautiful) venue for shows. Some are of a more commercial and profit-making nature but many of the Sony’s shows and events support Toronto’s cultural mosaic and are actually subsidised by the profit made from the commercial productions.

We fully support “innovative strategies” for the Sony Centre but strongly oppose any “adaptive reuse”. In our opinion, the Sony Centre should remain a theatre and event space; whether this is best achieved by continuing the current governance structure or moving to something different we cannot say.

Since the opening of the Four Seasons Centre (and even before), the Sony Centre management and Board have tried hard to make the Sony a hub for multi-cultural entertainment and these efforts have, in our opinion, been very successful and have helped to improve cross-cultural understanding in our very diverse city.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Kavanagh  
President  
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc. Board of Directors, SLNA  
Councillor McConnell  
Dam Brambilla, GM, Sony Centre