



# Graham McGregor, MPP

## Brampton North

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Attention: Toronto City Council

### **RE: Supporting a Barrier-Free Long-Term Land Lease with the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation for City-Owned Land**

Dear City Clerk John Elvidge

I am writing this letter in support of the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (SCCR)'s request for a long-term land lease with the City of Toronto. The project led by SCCR will build an important place of belonging for the Somali community, one of Canada's largest Black communities. It is planned as an important public space that will be a focal point for Somali creativity, community work, recreation, and for archiving Somali culture and heritage in Canada.

The City of Toronto has a historic opportunity to respond to over 40 years of community work to realize the SCCR social infrastructure project, fulfil a local need to animate public spaces, deliver vital amenities such as the proposed cultural spaces, childcare, gymnasium, aquatic facility, and public realm improvements. In addition, the SCCR's project will bring important services to the community and key anchor partners that have the potential to provide high-quality educational, vocational, recreational, health services and cultural programming.

The Somali community is one of the fastest growing in our province and plays a significant role in advancing Ontario both economically and culturally. The impact of the proud community stems from community leaders, advocates, business owners, volunteers, mentors and more.

Last October, I had the privilege of sponsoring SCCR's Dhis Bulshada showcase of Somali Arts and Culture at Queen's Park. It was a beautiful display of just how much the community has to offer in the art and culture sphere alone. It was great to see the young artists embracing their heritage and sharing it with the world.

The Somali community has helped make Canada stronger. And that comes with a story and a proud history that should be shared with everyone. It includes triumphs and sacrifice, and it deserves to be told. It also comes with a responsibility to ensure the community has a place they feel they can call home, where people of all ages can work, learn, build, and grow, together.

I ask that you consider the above when discussing a decision on a long-term land lease for the SCCR. If you have any questions or require more information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at [graham.mcgregor@pc.ola.org](mailto:graham.mcgregor@pc.ola.org).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Graham McGregor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Graham McGregor, MPP  
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