



210 Gloucester Street, Suite 101
Ottawa, ON K2P 2K4

March 15, 2022

Mayor Jim Watson
City of Ottawa

Interim Chief Steve Bell
Ottawa Police Services

Premier Rob Ford
Province of Ontario

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
Canada

Dear Mayor Watson, Interim Police Chief Bell, Premier Ford and Prime Minister Trudeau,

The Centretown Community Association of Ottawa (CCA) is demanding that all 3 levels of government begin an immediate and thorough public inquiry into the handling of the convoy occupation of downtown Ottawa and develop a joint plan to prevent similar events from happening again.

On February 6, 2022, the CCA sent a letter to Mayor Watson and then Police Chief Sloy expressing our deep concerns regarding the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Police Service's appalling failure to protect and support Centretown residents, businesses, churches and other organizations during the occupation by the so-called Freedom Convoy. We demanded action and an apology. We received no reply.

Centretown residents and businesses were particularly affected by the three and a half week long blockade of our neighbourhood. Residents suffered from the incessant noise of air horns up to and over 100 decibels, fireworks, and rowdy partying while noise and parking bylaws went unenforced. They lived in a continual atmosphere of intimidation and hate. They were bullied and assaulted when they ventured out of their homes. Their properties were defaced and despoiled. They lived in a miasma of diesel fume pollution 14 times greater than normal. Services such as garbage pickup and deliveries were suspended by the blockade of surrounding streets. Schools, businesses and social and medical services were forced to close. Businesses had to lay off employees and suffered losses that they will never fully recuperate. Many employees of closed businesses had no income during the blockade.

Centretown residents organized to protect and support each other with safety walks and grocery pick-ups. While this demonstrates the admirable sense of community that Centretown residents have built, it underscores our abandonment by those services and elected officials sworn to protect and serve our interests. For this reason, we insist that Centretown residents must be invited to participate in the public inquiries at the municipal and provincial levels.

We deserve better. We demand a public inquiry into what we perceive as a failure to properly plan for and manage a situation that could have been prevented. This situation happened on your watch, Mayor Watson, and we want to know why you asked convoy protestors to “please go home”, rather than pushing for immediate enforcement of existing laws and regulations. We want to know why the Ottawa Police Services did not take preventative action and did not enforce existing laws and regulations. We want to know why it took injunction proceedings by a private citizen to spur the city’s own legal actions. We want to know why all levels of government dithered while Centretown residents and businesses bore the brunt of these illegal actions.

We believe an accounting for and public inquiry into the actions and inactions of the City of Ottawa, the Province of Ontario, and the Government of Canada must be called immediately. We urge you to call this public inquiry to avoid similar fiascos in the future.

Sincerely,

Mary Huang
President
Centretown Community Association
president@centretowncitizens.ca

cc: Catherine McKenney, Councillor Ward 14 Somerset, City of Ottawa
Yasir Naqvi, MP, Ottawa Centre
Joel Harden, MPP, Ottawa Centre
Tobi Nussbaum, CEO, National Capital Commission
Matthew Luloff, Councillor Ward 1 Orléans,
Laura Dudas, Councillor and Deputy Mayor, Ward 2 Innes
Jan Harder, Councillor Ward 3 Barrhaven
Cathy Curry, Councillor Ward 4 Kanata North
Eli El-Chantiry, Councillor Ward 5 West Carleton-March
Glen Gower, Councillor Ward 6 Stittsville
Theresa Kavanagh, Councillor Ward 7 Bay
Rick Chiarelli, Councillor Ward 8 College
Keith Egli, Councillor Ward 9 Knoxdale-Merivale
Diane Deans, Councillor Ward 10 Gloucester-Southgate
Tim Tierney, Councillor Ward 11 Beacon Hill-Cyrville
Mathieu Fleury, Councillor Ward 12 Rideau-Vanier
Rawlson King, Councillor Ward 13 Rideau-Rockcliffe
Jeff Leiper, Councillor Ward 15 Kitchissippi
Riley Brockington, Councillor Ward 16 River
Shawn Menard, Councillor Ward 17 Capital
Jean Cloutier, Councillor Ward 18 Alta Vista,
Catherine Kitts, Councillor Ward 19 Cumberland
George Darouze, Councillor and Deputy Mayor, Ward 20 Osgoode
Scott Moffatt, Councillor Ward 21 Rideau-Goulbourn
Carol Anne Meehan, Councillor Ward 22 Gloucester-South Nepean
Allan Hubley, Councillor Ward 23 Kanata South
Federation of Citizen’s Associations of Ottawa Board
Centretown Community Association of Ottawa Board