

CanU



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Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

RE: VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM MEMORIAL, OTTAWA

The Council for Canadian Urbanism (CanU) is a national non-profit information and advocacy group incorporated in 2009, including many of Canada's leading urban experts, from the fields of city planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, development and related disciplines. Our Board of Directors is comprised of key public, private and academic sector leaders from major cities across Canada.

Our role is to actively promote better, more sustainable and healthy Canadian cities and urban areas, and to strengthen the role of good urban design. We are writing to add our voice to the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and the Canadian Institute of Planners, calling for the federal government to reconsider its decision to locate the proposed Victims of Communism Memorial on a Wellington Street site adjacent to the Supreme Court.

The proposed site has been earmarked for a federal building to complete the Supreme Court triad by leading urban designers retained by the federal government for over a century, including the 1915 *Federal Plan Commission* report prepared by Edward Bennett, the 1950 *National Capital Plan* prepared by Jacques Gréber and the 1989/ 2007 *Parliamentary Precinct Plan*, which won several national and international urban design awards.

We also note Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin's comment that such a memorial 'could send the wrong message within the judicial precinct unintentionally conveying a sense of bleakness and brutality that is inconsistent with a space dedicated to the administration of justice'.

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CanU supports the recommendations of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada that the proposed memorial be built at an alternative location near Confederation Boulevard. We also support further public input on the appropriate site for such a memorial, within the framework of the National Capital Commission's commemoration policies.

We strongly urge you to follow the advice of urban design experts within and outside of government to reconsider the proposed location for this memorial.

With respect,

Council for Canadian Urbanism Board of Directors

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