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The City of Ottawa's Draft Official Plan has serious problems and will fail unless improved greatly, says the People's Official Plan (an alliance of over 20 civil society groups)

OTTAWA, May 3, 2021 – The People's Official Plan (POP) has released its Key Issues document challenging the new draft Official Plan. Advocates say they want the new Official Plan to succeed.

As is, the new draft Official Plan does not provide a clear vision or consistent rules for development and could exacerbate the long history of conflict between communities and builders over spot rezoning. Community advocates also point to lack of readability, unsound governance and inadequate attention to the ecological base as foundational deficiencies in the draft plan.

The People's Official Plan (POP) key issues document highlights the need for:

- equitable access to tree cover and greenspace, especially in low-income areas;
- the means by which 15-minute neighbourhoods will absorb intensification and meet liveability goals;
- faster and deeper action to address the climate and affordable housing emergencies;
- planning for the inevitable impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- demonstration of the financial viability of urban growth and expansion plans;
- social equity measures now; and
- iron-clad safeguards for agricultural land and food security.

"We have identified the key issues and will keep a very careful eye on the City's next steps in this process, the "As We Heard It" report and the second draft of the official plan", says Angela Keller-Herzog, Executive Director of Community Associations for Environmental Sustainability.

Greenspace Alliance Chair Paul Johanis commented, "We all want a new start: a start based on collaboration that brings everyone together to build Ottawa into a truly liveable, sustainable and equitable community for all."

Background: The City of Ottawa's Official Plan and the People's Official Plan

Ottawa's new Official Plan is the policy framework for the physical development of Ottawa to 2046. It defines policies for land use and related housing and infrastructure decisions. Other strategic plans of the City of Ottawa – the Climate Change Master Plan, the Greenspace Master Plan, the Infrastructure Master Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Solid Waste Master Plan, among others – take their lead from the Official Plan.

Since April 2019, local organizations and individuals have come together face to face and online to shape Ottawa's new Official Plan and related City Council decisions. Over the past two years, through numerous discussions and outreach, the POP alliance has built a broad consensus across diverse city groups and among individuals about how to make Ottawa an inclusive, affordable and liveable city. Recommendations are found in POP's Key Issues document and in its 117-page Technical Report – a line-

by-line review of major policies in the City's draft Official Plan and list of 12 high-level targets for monitoring progress.

For further details about the People's Official Plan and to access the two documents responding to the draft Official Plan, visit <https://www.ottawacimatesolutions.net/forum/our-draft-plan/our-feedback-on-the-draft-official-plan>

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