



March 4, 2021

Mayor Jim Watson, City of Ottawa  
Councillors, City of Ottawa

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

**RE: Resolution Opposing Chalk River Nuclear Waste Facility**

The Glebe Community Association (GCA) strongly supports the motion tabled on February 10, 2021 by Councillors Theresa Kavanagh and Catherine McKenney regarding nuclear waste disposal plans at Chalk River. We urge you to support this motion and urge Council to swiftly adopt and act on it, in the interests of the health and safety of the citizens of Ottawa.

We understand that the motion will go before the City's Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management Committee (EPWWM) Committee on March 30. We strongly urge Chair Moffatt, Vice-Chair Menard and all members of this Committee to approve the motion in full, so that it can proceed without delay to Council.

Water is our most precious resource. We can't live without it. Therefore we must do everything we can to keep the sources of our drinking water safe from pollution.

Without a doubt, Ottawa is a leader in water safety. The work of our water quality officials and technical staff is exemplary. As a result, Ottawans have access to some of the healthiest drinking water in the province. But ultimately this quality product only exists because of its source, the Ottawa River, a local and national treasure.

Based on the testimony we have heard and seen, we believe that the Ottawa River is at serious risk of radioactive contamination if the proposals by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories for the Chalk River above-ground mound, less than a kilometre from the river, and Rolphton nuclear site entombment, a mere 100 metres from the river, are allowed to proceed. These proposals have been challenged by numerous organizations and individuals including many scientists. The International Atomic Energy Agency recommends against entombment as a method of

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disposing of decommissioned nuclear facilities. Over 140 municipalities, including the City of Gatineau and the Montreal Municipal Council, have passed resolutions opposing Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' radioactive waste plans, as have several indigenous organizations.

Our water quality professionals are able to filter out a vast array of unhealthy bacteria and other pollutants from our water supply. But filtering out radioactive materials would represent a significant challenge. For example, removal of tritium (radioactive hydrogen) from water is very difficult and expensive. We understand that there are no plans to remove tritium from the water that leaches out of the Chalk River mound, but instead it will be released into Perch Lake which drains into the Ottawa River. Perch Lake is already contaminated with tritium at levels over 2,000 times the natural background, and leachate from the mound would increase this several-fold.

As Councillors Kavanagh and McKenney aptly state in their motion, the proposed nuclear waste disposal plans for Chalk River are deeply flawed and, if implemented, will put the Ottawa River and all who depend on it at serious risk.

Mayor Watson, we in the Glebe and indeed all residents of Ottawa are directly affected stakeholders. We urge you to support the motion by Kavanagh/McKenney opposing the Chalk River Nuclear Waste Facility and to represent our interests on this issue at all relevant fora.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Smith, President  
Glebe Community Association (GCA)