Press Release

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County of Brant, Ontario

County of Brant Public Library and County of Brant announce historic location of new main library

The futures of two significant projects in the County of Brant align this week. The County of Brant Public Library and the County of Brant are excited to announce that the new Main Branch Library will be built on the site of the Bawcutt Centre.

Located at 13 Burwell Street in Paris, Ontario, the Bawcutt Centre was built in 1854 as the Paris Town Hall and is one of the oldest civic Gothic Revival-style buildings in Canada. Once at the heart of its community, the building will be restored as a cultural cornerstone for County of Brant residents. It was designated a National Historic Site in 2020.

“The County of Brant Public Library has been searching for a site for its new Main Branch Library since 2013,” explains Library Board Chair Fred Gladding. “This location allows us to create a community hub that embraces diversity and encourages curiosity, discovery, and literacy. We are honoured to preserve its history and build a central library that reflects our community’s growth and needs.”

The new Main Branch Library will feature a blend of old and new elements. Accessible, open community spaces, quiet study rooms, and technology labs will blend with heritage features like original brick and stone. The original opera hall will be restored to its former glory and equipped for modern performances and live events.

“There is a wonderful synergy with combining these two projects” says Brant Mayor David Bailey. “A main library with a performance space like this will be a huge asset for all County residents, and will kick start the rejuvenation of Paris’ upper town.”

Work on the project will begin this fall with the search for an architectural design firm. Construction is anticipated to start in 2022 and be completed by 2024.

For more information, visit brantlibrary.ca.

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About the County of Brant Public Library

The County of Brant Public Library serves the County of Brant, Ontario, with five branches located in Burford, Glen Morris, Paris, Scotland-Oakland, and St. George. Check us out online at brantlibrary.ca or @brantlibrary on Facebook and Twitter.

About the County of Brant

The County of Brant consists of several unique communities; each offering their own personality ranging from artistic charisma to outdoor adventure and country charm. The County offers an attractive quality of life to residents which includes a diverse selection of recreational activities, rich cultural and arts experiences, plenty of beautiful places to hike and paddle, top-shelf shopping and dining options and quick access to major travel routes. The County is home to more than 37,000 people and over 1300 businesses. The County of Brant is a responsive, healthy and progressive community that recognizes the importance of respect, integrity and teamwork. www.brant.ca or @brantcommunity on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

About The Bawcutt Centre

The Bawcutt Centre (formerly, the Paris Old Town Hall) is located at 13 Burwell Street, Paris, Ontario. It is one of the oldest civic Gothic buildings in Canada. The original structure was built in 1854 and consists of a basement, a first / ground / main floor, second / upper floor, and a bell tower. A one-storey addition was put on the east side of the original structure in 1870. In 1954, the Mary Maxim Company purchased the property, and, in 1964, added a two-storey addition. In recent years, community initiatives to save, preserve, and repurpose the Bawcutt Centre have evolved. In October of 2015, Council authorized acquisition of the Bawcutt Centre. In December of 2015, Council entered into a Gifting Agreement with Skystone Media's CEO Linda Schuyler to secure a $1,000,000 donation towards both acquisition and restoration of The Bawcutt Centre. The building was renamed from the Paris Old Town Hall to The Bawcutt Centre in honor of the principal donor's father, Jack Bawcutt, who is a former mayor of the Town of Paris. The property was acquired in March of 2016 and The Bawcutt Centre Advisory Committee was formed. In October 2020, the former Paris Town Hall was designated as a national historic site. www.brant.ca/theBawcuttCentre





Questions or comments? Please contact: Kelly Bernstein, Library CEO kelly.bernstein@brant.ca

Michael Bradley, County CAO michael.bradley@brant.ca