

Durham Consolidated Courthouse Update



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Issue 3 - August 2006

Justice Under One Roof

Today there are six separate court facilities in the Durham Region. Two additional sites house offices for the Crown Attorneys and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program. These numbers make Durham the second most fragmented court jurisdiction in the province after Toronto. The Durham Consolidated Courthouse (DCC) will soon allow people to work together under the same roof. It will bring together:

- Ontario Court of Justice – Criminal;
- Superior Court of Justice – Criminal, Civil (including Small Claims), and Family;
- Judiciary from both the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice;
- Justices of the Peace;
- Crown Attorneys' offices;
- Victim/Witness Assistance Program;
- Adult Probation and Parole Court Liaison Office;
- Youth Probation Office;
- Legal Aid Criminal and Legal Aid Family Duty Counsel offices;
- Durham Regional Police; and
- Offices for community agencies, including mental health services and bail program.

Currently, court facilities in Durham occupy 173,946 square feet of space. The largest single facility measures 77,280 square feet. At approximately 374,000 square feet, the DCC will more than double the space currently dedicated to justice services in the Durham Region.

The Ministry of the Attorney General will use this space in innovative and effective ways to ensure that the interests of all those who work at and visit the facility are served. The courthouse will feature:

- 33 courtrooms, three motion rooms and two settlement/hearing rooms;
- a cafeteria and numerous lunchrooms;
- a Jury Assembly Room with capacity for 300 people; and
- enhanced security features, such as video and audio surveillance systems and a main-entrance security checkpoint..

The DCC will be the most technologically advanced courthouse in the province. Five of the courtrooms will be outfitted for video conferencing. Two remote video testimony rooms will accommodate vulnerable and child witnesses. One jury courtroom will be equipped for simultaneous interpretation, which allows the proceedings to be translated into another language for people sitting in the public gallery.

The DCC will give justice services in Durham a place to grow - together.

Project Timeline

- ✓ Request for Qualifications (RFQ) issued: March 2005
 - ✓ Request for Proposals (RFP) issued: February 2006
 - ✓ Current site remediation efforts started: March 2006
 - Bids received: October 2006
 - Site remediation completion (Target late 2006)
 - Construction begins (Target early 2007)

The New Face of Downtown Oshawa Downtown Action Plan is Re-energizing the Downtown Core

By David Tuley, City of Oshawa

The City of Oshawa has implemented a plan to revitalize the downtown core for all to enjoy.

Completed in 2005, the goal of the Downtown Oshawa Action Plan is to create a vibrant, exciting and livable downtown area for residents, businesses and visitors. "Rather than a focus on planning or vision alone, the Downtown Action Plan identified a formula for change in the downtown," explained Cindy Symons-Milroy, Director of Economic Development.

Some of the projects identified under the Plan include:

✦ The **Downtown Sports & Entertainment Facility** will open November 3, 2006. The state-of-the-art facility will be the new home of the Oshawa Generals and the Oshawa Sports Hall of Fame & Museum. It will include two indoor ice pads, private box suites and a two-storey restaurant, as well as a civic plaza with an outdoor rink and fountain.

✦ Downtown Oshawa will be home to **new condominium residences**. In addition to the two Parkwood Residence towers that are nearing completion, two more condominium projects are planned for downtown Oshawa.

✦ A community stakeholders group is seeking proposals for the **revitalization of the historic Regent Theatre**.

✦ The hiring of a dedicated **Downtown Development Officer**.

✦ The Mayor of Oshawa has been working with developers to create a downtown university campus.

This spring, the City launched Part II of the Action Plan – the Downtown Master Plan – that will guide development in downtown Oshawa over the next several years. It will also help developers and builders understand the City's expectations with respect to the character and quality of new buildings, parks and streets downtown. A preview of the plan shows key redevelopments such as



Revitalizing downtown Oshawa.

town homes, shopping areas and a student campus. There will also be green pedestrian corridors that link the Durham Consolidated Courthouse, Downtown Sports & Entertainment Facility and City Hall to the creek valley and park system.

Statistics also describe a promising story: the value of building permits in the downtown for 2003-2005 inclusive (not counting the Sports & Entertainment Facility) total approx. \$37 million, five times more than 1994-1996, two times more than 1997-1999, and 4.5 times more than 2000-2002. Employment numbers are also up: looking at only four employers – Canada Post, City Hall, Durham Regional Police and the Ministry of Finance – there are over 2,700 workers downtown.

A recent announcement from General Motors stated that it will build the redesigned Chevrolet Camaro at its Oshawa Plant, which will mean even more momentum to the downtown revitalization of Oshawa.

Remediation Update

Site remediation is moving forward on schedule, and is expected to be completed by late 2006.

One of the three residential houses on the site has been fully salvaged and moved to a nearby lot, as agreed to by the City of Oshawa and the owner. Golder Associates Ltd., the company contracted to handle the site remediation, is trying to recover up to three quarters of the demolition waste in order to reduce pressure on Durham Region's landfill areas.

Other work continues as well. Large pads have been set up on site to hold the excavated soil for testing and treatment. Soil that does not meet Ministry of Environment (MOE) criteria will be moved off site. Construction hoarding fences are up and the excavation work is scheduled to begin the week of August 28. There will be on-going mandatory monitoring of the site to protect the health and safety of everyone using or visiting the courthouse.

Meeting with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC)

A meeting was held on August 21 with O'Connor Associates, Dr. Lesbia Smith (an environmental and occupational health consultant), Ministry of the Attorney General's Joint Health and Safety Committee (comprised of representatives from Court Services Division, Crown Attorneys' office and the Durham Regional Police), and representatives of the Superior and Ontario Court Judiciary, Victim /Witness Assistance Program, Durham Region Law Association, Probation and Parole and Infrastructure Ontario to review environmental reports from the DCC site. MAG's JHSC representatives are encouraged to share what they have learned with the employees they represent. Minutes of the meeting will be posted at each court location for staff to review. Look for more information from this session in the September newsletter.

Progress Update Session

As a follow-up to the June 20 Progress Update Sessions on remediation, another session will be held on September 14, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. at the Whitby Courthouse, 601 Rossland Road, Courtroom One.

Experts will be available to discuss topics such as:

- City of Oshawa's Downtown Action Plan and Parking Study;
- Urban Design Guidelines;
- Remediation; and
- Safety and Security.

Watch for your invitation.

Ask Us!

If you have questions or comments about the project, write:

info@infrastructureontario.ca

Please ensure the subject line reads "Durham Project."

Your questions are important to us and will be responded to at future Progress Update Sessions and through future editions of this newsletter.