

New Halton Courthouse a "priority"

A new Courthouse for Halton Region is a priority for the Government, says Ontario's Attorney General.

"I have been to Milton to visit the Courthouse there. I know that we need a new Courthouse. It's a priority, again I'm saying, but we'll have to wait and see, with the next budget," Attorney General Madeleine Meilleur said in Question Period on March 24 in response to a question from Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

Mr. Arnott questioned the Minister about the urgent need for a new Courthouse in Halton Region and asked why the Government is dragging its feet on approving one.

"I've written to the Attorney General numerous times and spoken to her numerous times about this problem," Mr. Arnott told the House. "I also asked for a briefing for Halton-area MPPs from the Attorney

General's staff on the process for new courthouse approvals. We attended that briefing on December 2 and we were led to believe that a new Halton Courthouse was indeed a priority, as the Minister just said today."

"But just weeks later, the Government announced an addition to the Courthouse in Brampton and no mention was made of the need in Halton Region. My question for the Attorney General is quite simple: When will you announce approval for a new Halton Courthouse?" he asked.

The Minister indicated that while the Ministry's first priority is a Courthouse in Toronto, Halton Region is next on the Government's list.

"The number one priority that is going forward is here in Toronto, but the next one, Milton - it's a growing area and the decision on where the courthouse will be built

is not made yet," said the Minister.

The existing court facility in Milton was first built more than 50 years ago. While there was addition 35 years ago, the population of Halton Region has exploded in recent years and is expected to continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

"The existing court facility in Milton is aging, overcrowded, and inadequate in terms of security and privacy," Mr. Arnott said after Question Period. "People are often required to travel to Brampton or Guelph because the existing facility simply cannot handle the volume of cases."

"Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr, Regional Council, Courthouse users, and all four of Halton's MPPs have been pushing for this project," noted Mr. Arnott. "There is broad support. It is time to get this started."



Brampton Mayor Linda Jeffrey and Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette

- Submitted photo

Collaboration and co-operation the themes of meeting between Mayors

Brampton Mayor Linda Jeffrey and Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette

have agreed to further discuss ways their respective communities can work together in the spirit of collaboration and co-operation between the two municipal neighbours.

Topics discussed during the March 27 meeting included the need for Two-Way, All-Day GO Transit rail service between the two communities, the proposed GTA West corridor highway and building on the new relationship between the two communities.

"There are a number of common border issues that we could effectively address together, such as enhancing local economic opportunities," said Mayor Bonnette.

"I have believed for a long time now that municipalities should work together on regional issues such as transit and transportation," said Mayor Jeffrey. "I look forward to working closely with Mayor Bonnette as Brampton and Halton Hills continues to grow our relationship."

The meeting, which was held in Brampton on March 27, was also attended by Halton Hills Regional Councillor Clark Somerville.

The leaders agreed both communities would benefit from further discussions and partnering on a number of fronts. The Mayors will meet again in the near future.

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