



## Media Release

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Brant, Ontario

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### Demolition Begins at New Library Site

Demolition work at the Bawcutt Centre, Paris' original town hall, begins on Monday, July 24.

In preparation for construction of the County of Brant Public Library's New Main Branch, crews will remove non-heritage portions of the existing structure, including the 1964 addition that once housed the Mary Maxim company.

Demolition of the addition will expose parts of the Old Town Hall that haven't been seen for decades.

"Our primary focus is to preserve and stabilize the original 1854 heritage building," says Kelly Bernstein, Library CEO "moving us closer to restoring the original building in a safe and historically responsible way."

Heritage stabilization includes structural reinforcement, removing loose masonry, tarping the bell tower, and boarding up windows. Salvageable heritage materials such as bricks will be stored for re-use during restoration.

The site is also home to Chimney Swifts, a species of bird protected under the *Endangered Species Act*. Care has been taken to ensure that demolition will not impact the Swifts; the chimney they use for nesting is in good condition and will not be touched at this time.

Demolition will be overseen by general contractor Collaborative Structures Limited (CSL) and is anticipated to be completed by early fall to ensure the remaining structure is secure and protected before winter.

For archival purposes, the current building has been completely photo-documented.

In June, County of Brant Council approved an architectural design concept to add 20,000 square feet and reinvent the building as the County of Brant Public Library's

new Main Branch. A request for tenders is anticipated to be released in late fall. Construction, once begun, is expected to take approximately 24 months.

Read about project updates at [brantlibrary.ca/NewMainBranch](http://brantlibrary.ca/NewMainBranch).

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### **About the Bawcutt Centre**

Community efforts to save, preserve, and repurpose the Old Town Hall began in the 1980s. County Council purchased the building in 2015 with the support of a \$1,000,000 donation from Skystone Media CEO Linda Schuyler. The building was renamed the Bawcutt Centre in honour of Schuyler's father, Jack Bawcutt, a former mayor of the Town of Paris.

In October 2020, the Bawcutt Centre received federal recognition as a National Historic Site. It is the oldest example of a Gothic Revival-style civic building in Canada.

On June 27, 2023, County of Brant Council approved architectural designs for the new Main Branch Library.

### **About the Library**

The County of Brant Public Library serves the County of Brant, Ontario, with five branches in Burford, Glen Morris, Paris, Scotland-Oakland, and St. George, and a mobile library and 24/7 book-lending kiosk in Onondaga.

Visit the library online at [brantlibrary.ca](http://brantlibrary.ca), @brantlibrary on Facebook and Twitter, and @brantcountypubliclibrary on Instagram.

### **Questions or comments? Connect with:**

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