



PRESS RELEASE

June 12, 2009

For immediate release

A New Public Library for Acton

In the largest-ever combined infrastructure investment in Canadian history, communities across Ontario will receive nearly \$3.4 billion in joint federal-provincial-municipal funding for 1,400 key infrastructure projects.

John Baird, Canada's Transport and Infrastructure Minister, and George Smitherman, Ontario Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, today announced joint funding for shovel-ready infrastructure projects, expected to create thousands of jobs and help stimulate the economy, with money allocated from Canada's Economic Action Plan and Ontario's 2009 provincial budget, *Confronting the Challenge: Building Our Economic Future*.

The Acton Library, built in 1967 as a Centennial project, has among its existing deficiencies, an inaccessible layout for persons with mobility challenges, insufficient space for collections and services, an aging structure and limited parking. The current facility is approximately 3,700 square feet. The minimum industry standard for public library space is 0.6 gross square feet per capita, which means the Acton Library should be 9,000 square feet to serve the existing and planned population.

Public libraries are a proactive partner in economic development. Particularly in this sluggish economy, the unemployed or underemployed are relying increasingly on Library resources for career planning including the pursuit of education opportunities. There is also greater use of the Library's public computers for employment research, resume writing and sending of online

applications. Library staff are also helping people to strengthen their computer literacy skills so that they can function more effectively in a digital world.

With the Library's focus on small business support, people with an entrepreneurial bent are learning how to start, grow and sustain successful businesses. Replacing the Acton Library will yield significant economic benefits for the community, with more public computers and more space to house materials for job seekers, budding entrepreneurs and returning students.

Literacy building resources are also contributing to the long-term economic success of young people. Research has shown that there is a strong correlation between early literacy, and positive performance in school and beyond. Story time programs and high quality reading materials represent the first link in a chain of investments needed to build a competitive workforce. A proper Acton Library will accommodate more material for beginning readers and an appropriately sized programming room.

The Library serves as an important resource and refuge, especially in these challenging economic times, as well as a place for people to freely gather and exchange ideas. The Acton Library replacement will continue to develop the community's assets by ensuring that its residents have the tools they need to lead healthy and productive lives.

Beyond the economic and social benefits, the Acton Library will bring environmental benefits as well. It is anticipated that the building will be designed to meet a Silver Level of LEED certification.

The approval of the Acton Library replacement for infrastructure funding means that the governments of Canada, Ontario and the Town of Halton Hills will each contribute up to \$1,166,667 to this project, for a total project cost of \$3,500,000. Construction of the project is expected to start this fall, and be completed within two years.

“I see this as a tremendous gift to the community” says Jane Diamanti, Director of Halton Hills Public Library. “Not only will loyal library users be able to enjoy larger, more varied collections, more Internet stations, more seating and programming space, but those who have been unable to use the Acton Library due to the many physical barriers will be able to benefit from these services as well. And for residents who are not Library users, they may be pleasantly surprised to find many resources that they did not expect including new DVDs and music CDs, books on CD, bestsellers, and popular magazines”.

The Library staff and Board are thrilled to see this project go forward and know that the renewed Acton Library will be a civic asset that will be appreciated for many years to come.

At the June 29th Council meeting, Library staff will be bringing forward a Facility Study Report on Acton Branch by Jim Morgenstern of *dmA Planning and Management Services*. The report recommends a preferred size and development option for the new Acton Branch, which will be constructed on the site of the existing branch.

For more information, contact:

Jane Diamanti

Director

Halton Hills Public Library

905-873-2681 Ext. 2501

diamantij@hhpl.on.ca