



Halton County Law Association

491 Steeles Avenue East
Milton, Ontario L9T 1Y7

November 9, 2020

The Honourable Doug Downey
Attorney General of Ontario
McMurtry-Scott Building
720 Bay Street, 11th floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2S9

Dear Sir:

Re: Cancellation of Halton Region Consolidated Courthouse Project

It has now been six months since you announced the cancellation of the Halton Region Consolidated Courthouse Project. Despite assurances from you and your staff that an announcement would be made in the fall outlining your government's plan to address the chronic dysfunction of the Milton and Burlington courthouses, we have heard nothing. In fact, no mention was made of the Halton courthouse project or any planned expenditure by your Ministry in Halton in the Finance Minister's budget statement released last week.

When I last wrote to you in May (attached), I cautioned that unless immediate action was taken to address our crumbling infrastructure, there would be a collapse of the justice system in Halton. In early October, all in-person hearings were suspended at the Milton courthouse after mould was once again discovered in the building. As of today's date, this situation continues, with no end in sight. I suggest to you that had the courts in Milton not already been operating at a reduced level in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the suspension of all in-person hearings pending remediation of the mould issue would have resulted in serious prejudice to a vast number of accused persons, and disrupted countless family and civil proceedings in both the Ontario Court of Justice and the Superior Court. In other words, the predicted collapse would have come to pass.

While we fully appreciate that the COVID-19 pandemic has placed a strain on your Ministry's resources, and that priority has been given to investing in and implementing technological solutions to modernize the functions of the justice system, it is clear to our members that action must be taken sooner than later to address the need for new infrastructure to ensure that the citizens of Halton have meaningful access to justice.

We therefore once again ask that the Halton consolidated courthouse project be revived. Our members and our other justice sector partners in Halton want to work with you to revise

the project design to better accommodate emerging technologies, as well as current and future demand for services. However, the time for action is now. To delay any longer will only prolong the harm that has already come to the administration of justice in Halton.

I look forward to your response.

Yours truly,



Ken Kelertas

President, Halton County Law Association
905-825-4823

- cc The Honourable George R. Strathy, Chief Justice of Ontario
- The Honourable Geoffrey B. Morawetz, Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Justice
- The Honourable Lise Maisonneuve, Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice
- The Honourable Leonard Ricchetti, Regional Senior Judge for the Central West Region, Superior Court of Justice
- The Honourable Paul R. Currie, Regional Senior Justice for the Central West Region, Ontario Court of Justice
- The Honourable Kendra D. Coats, Local Administrative Justice, Superior Court of Justice, Milton
- The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier
- Ted Arnott, Speaker of the Legislature and MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills
- Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP Oakville North-Burlington; Vice Chair, Standing Committee on Justice Policy
- Stephen Crawford, MPP Oakville
- Parm Gill, MPP Milton
- Jane McKenna, MPP Burlington
- Lindsey Park, MPP Durham; Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney General
- Roman Baber, MPP York Centre; Chair, Standing Committee on Justice Policy
- Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Opposition
- Gurratan Singh - Member, Standing Committee on Justice Policy
- Gary Carr, Chair, Halton Region
- Rob Burton, Mayor, Town of Oakville
- Marianne Meed Ward, Mayor, City of Burlington
- Gord Krantz, Mayor, Town of Milton

Rick Bonnette, Mayor, Town of Halton Hills
Stephen J. Tanner, Chief of Police, Halton Regional Police Service
Bill Woodward, Chair, Federation of Ontario Law Associations
Teresa Donnelly, Treasurer, Law Society of Ontario
Claire Wilkinson, Bencher, Central West, Law Society of Ontario
Gary Graham, Bencher, Central West, Law Society of Ontario
Charlene Theodore, President, Ontario Bar Association
Christopher Cheung, Director, Policy & Public Affairs, Ontario Bar Association