

Mayor Bradley and Members of Council
Mr. Chris Carter - CAO
Mr. Chris Carter – Director of Corporate Services.

We are writing to you today in support of those advocating for the continuance of funding to complete the design package attributed to the project that has been put forward regarding the refurbishment and expansion of the Brights Grove Library and Gallery in the Grove. The proposed construction of the 7,000 square foot addition designed to house an expanded library and community hall is not only necessary, but is long overdue. The existing library has been attempting to fulfill the needs of a population that has been in a continuous state of growth for many years, and as such the library is in a much-needed upgrade, if you will.

The library, in its present state, offers very little in on-line capabilities, and has only two computer docks to service the community. As well, there is an estimated 7000 pieces of rentable material (books, cds, etc.), whereas the expansion plans suggest an increase of about 5000 pieces of educational material. In this state-of-the-art society of ours, it is vital to provide a modern inventory of research hardware and software. (records from 2018 indicate 49,854 pieces of material were checked out from the Brights Grove library, an increase of 108% from the previous year.)

Many of the members of our service club have lived in Brights Grove or in the surrounding area for years. We have enjoyed having the Library and the Gallery in our community. We have availed ourselves of the myriad offerings of both, with a neighbor contingent of patrons from well outside the Brights Grove are using the facilities as well.

But as history of the current facility, the stately Faethorne will attest, a newness is required that will encapsulate that which has been identified not simply as a need, but almost an entitlement for this Faethorne edifice, a truly known landmark, constructed in 1875.

Adding on the addition for a new Library which may have as many as 12,000 books in inventory, and creating new space for the Gallery, now housed on the upper floor (limited access due to the absence of an elevator) will make for an exciting and educational experience for all of those making use of the facility. And people will visit many times, from many areas of our city and beyond.

And we should not ignore the importance of the noted Community Room as a definite asset to the project, which would allow for many and various usages, outlined in information passed on to you...mentioned as a Satellite location that will reach out to accommodate programs from organizations such as the Strangway Centre, Lambton Public Health, Rebound, etc. and act as a meeting room for service clubs.

Brights Grove has been in a sound growth pattern for many years, and that trend continues today. We have witnessed the housing development at Huron Oaks Golf Course, the many homes that have been constructed along Lakeshore Road as well as a large project being developed along Egremont Road. The fact is that there are far too many either recently finished or in development to mention. They all represent potential users of the Brights Grove Library and the Gallery in the Grove.

We see both the Library, the Gallery and the Community Room being gathering places where multiple generations and nationalities can get together and share a commonality of the joy of reading, the love of art and culture, and a chance to meet new people and make new friendships.

Those of us in the Brights Grove Optimist Club are very pleased to add our name to those who would like to see the proposed plans move on to completion, and the construction of the new combined Library, Art Gallery and Community Room be accepted and added to the list of the City's Capital Budget.

Thank you.

The Board of Directors
Brights Grove Optimist Club.