

Luke Weiler, BA JD
Guelph, ON

October 1, 2020

Mayor Cam Guthrie;
Members of Council
City of Guelph
1 Carden Street
Guelph, ON N1H 3A1

Dear Mayor Guthrie and members of council:

I'm writing to ask for the central library Guelph needs.

Everyone agrees the current building is totally inadequate. It is too small to house the collection, it does not offer the amenities expected of a modern library, and it is in poor physical condition. The building should have been replaced long ago.

After many frustrating false starts, a replacement is in sight. I participated in an online presentation of the new plan for the library on September 29. I'm very impressed with the proposal to construct a single-use library building in the south of the Baker Street District. Much attention has been paid not only to constructing a facility that will serve the needs of Guelphites for decades, but also to integrating it into our downtown.

The plan is for a library of 88,000 square feet. This will be funded by, among other items, a tax levy of 0.39% for 20 years - or about \$14.65 per year, per household. I want you to know that I find this an absolute bargain and I am astonished that for so little, I can get such a tremendous gift for myself, my fellow citizens, and generations to come. I enthusiastically offer to pay my share. Guelph has made many pennywise and pound-foolish errors in the past (e.g. missing out on the old post office only to spend millions renting space downtown) and I hope that no one on council is tempted to commit yet another such mistake now, when so much can be bought for so little.

I understand some voices are calling for a smaller, cheaper library. Please resist the impulse to split the difference and spend our money to buy us half a loaf. The library board has determined that this is the appropriate size and I trust their expertise. It would be the height of folly to spend tens of millions of dollars only to gain a building that is out of date and undersized on the day of completion. We have waited too long to get this wrong.

Many elected representatives never get the opportunity that you have now, to choose to build a truly important and badly needed beautiful civic building. I ask you to fearlessly commit to this project, knowing that it is the right decision and one which you can be proud of long after your time on council.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Weiler', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Luke Weiler

cc. Scott Butler, Chair, Guelph Public Library Board of Directors