



The new civic administration building shown at night with the lights on.

RAY MARTIN, TIMES STAFF

Old meets new at city hall

While the new civic administration building opens, work begins on historic city hall

By RAY MARTIN
Times Staff

The new civic administration building may be operational, but there's no rest for those overseeing the project.

Bob Paul, city director of facility management and development, and Slobodanka Lekic, city architectural design technologist, have been busy for the last 18 months overseeing development of the new home for city staff.

Now, they are busy following up on any construction deficiencies found in the new building, as well as preparing for the next big project — renovating historic city hall.

Although city staff are happy with the new facility, any new construction comes with glitches which may crop up over the first 12 months of operation.

"For any new building, it takes four seasons to tweak everything," Paul said. "This building is no different. If anything, we're seeing fewer deficiencies than most buildings because of the resources put into it. We had a good construction team that took care of things as they came up."

As the final tweaking of the new civic administration building continues, work is beginning on the overhaul of the historic city hall.

"It's going extremely well," said Lekic of the prep work now taking place for the first phase of renovations.

In the past month, construction crews have closed down the building. Archives staff have moved into the civic administration building and council has shifted meetings to a main floor meeting room in the new building.

The archives collection

remains in the city hall and a wall has been built to protect it during construction.

"The wall is up and is keeping out all the dust that's being created," Lekic said.

Meanwhile, humidity readings are being taken three times a day in the archives to ensure the fragile paper collection is protected.

As part of the first phase of construction, Paul said a portion of city hall's basement mechanical system is being moved to accommodate coming changes.

The city will be spending roughly \$1.8 million this year on the historic city hall. In the first phase of the project, a new internal staircase is being installed to meet current building and fire codes. Once completed, the iron fire escape at the rear of the

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Looking in the foyer at the civic administration building.

JEFF HURST, TIMES STAFF



New civic administration building viewed from civic square.

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Old meets new

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building, which was added in the 1960s, can be removed. First phase construction will also include the creation of the controversial glass link between the new civic administration building and historic city hall.

"It will be a very complex structure," Paul said.

The designs, currently being prepared, will have to be approved by Ontario Heritage Trust, which has a heritage easement around historic city hall.

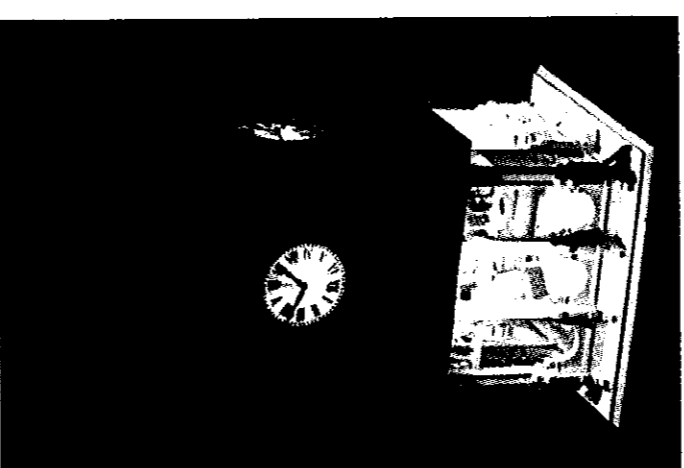
"It's going to take time to get those designs approved," Paul said. "Last year, we put new slate on the roof and it took us four months to get approval."

Once the framework for the new link is designed, approved, and fabricated, it will be set in place and only then will the glazing contractor be called in to take measurements for the new glass to be installed.

"The glass people will come in and measure everything up. They have to be very exact. They measure to a fraction of what should be. It's a very complex project."

Paul estimates the first phase of the project will be completed by the end of July. While that is happening, work on designing phase two will be underway.

"When the new budget is approved March 4, we will be able to move ahead developing a concept and hiring a her-



Clock tower at historic city hall.

RAY MARTIN, TIMES STAFF

itage consultant to help us with the detailed design and work with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Paul emphasized the work on the renovations will not be rushed.

"We'll be taking all the time we need to do it right," he said.

Just the facts

Facts about the civic administration building:

- The new building employs many features of sustainable design, the wave of the future in the field of architecture.
- The new building is expected to be the first city hall in Canada with Gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. LEED is a nationally recognized road map established by the U.S. Green Building Council.
- The atrium's focal point is a "living wall" of tropical plants. The plants cleanse the air of pollutants such as formaldehyde, volatile organic compounds, dust, and spores. This four-storey high "living wall" will enhance the natural beauty of the atrium while providing air purification, cleaning and re-circulating air throughout the building. A soothing sound of running water and providing humidity during the winter months are also benefits of the "living wall".
- A portion of the roof is made up of plants, grass and shrubs, rather than asphalt or other granular substances. This "green roof" will retain heat in the winter and cool things off in summer, cutting down on the need for heating and air conditioning.
- There are more than 3,000 plants utilized for this building.
- Exceptional water conservation performance is achieved through a cistern, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and water efficient landscaping. All rainwater that falls on the new building will be collected in a 10,000-litre cistern tank and will be used to flush toilets.
- Inviting pedestrian traffic and alternate forms of commuting, bicycle racks, storage and change rooms will be available for riders in order to encourage people to leave their cars at home.

Information from City of Cambridge