

City approves architects for library expansion

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City councillors approved the hiring yesterday of Levitt Goodman Architects of Toronto for the expansion of the main library on Queen Street and construction of an underground parking garage.

"I think it's great news for the project," Sonia Lewis, the Kitchener Public Library's chief executive officer, said in an interview.

Levitt Goodman Architects has done much of the preliminary work on the library expansion already. The architectural firm will work in association with Phillip H. Carter, an architect with extensive experience designing libraries, and the Walter Fedy Partnership.

The design and engineering work for the library and parking garage is worth \$1.7 million.

"He's done over 50 projects," Lewis said of Carter's experience.

"If there is someone who knows public libraries, it is Phillip Carter."

The nearly \$40-million project will add 25,000 square feet of space to the library and include a complete renovation of the existing space.

Of that amount, the library is expected to raise about \$4 million.

Another \$18 million is slated for a 400-space underground parking garage to be constructed behind the library. The city, region and province are sharing the cost of the parking garage.

"Given how important the KPL is as a cultural institution for our growing community, it's great that a large portion of the project will be carried out by people who were raised, educated and employed in Waterloo Region," Russ Wong, of the Walter Fedy Partnership, said in an email.

Levitt Goodman Architects is no stranger to the area. That firm did the architectural work for the Waterloo Region Children's Museum.

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