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Old Wetaskiwin courthouse to become new city hall

Alberta government kicks in to help restore historic building

Wetaskiwin... A treasured Wetaskiwin landmark has a new lease on life, thanks to a government commitment to turn it over to the municipality and help pay for its restoration.

The Alberta government will sell the old Wetaskiwin courthouse to the City of Wetaskiwin for a nominal sum and contribute \$800,000 to help pay for the old court's refurbishment. The building will serve as Wetaskiwin's new city hall.

"The old courthouse is one of central Alberta's historic treasures," said Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation. "The old courthouse, soon to be the new city hall, will complement Wetaskiwin's other historical attractions, such as the recently restored old water tower and the Reynolds-Alberta Museum."

"We've been trying to find a suitable use for the old court for many years, " said LeRoy Johnson, MLA for Wetaskiwin-Camrose. "I'm glad to see the funding from the Alberta government will support historical restoration in Wetaskiwin and play a part in the development of Wetaskiwin's new city hall."

Arrangements to finalize the transfer of ownership should be completed by spring 2006. The City of Wetaskiwin is responsible for raising the additional funds to complete the \$4-million project.

Quick facts about the courthouse:

- Built in 1907. Vacant since 1991. Surplus to government use.
- The three-storey building has a floor area of 1,459 square metres.
- Designated a provincial historic site in 1977 and a national historic site in 1980.
- Historical elements include the exterior building façade, the courtroom, two jail cells and several corridors and stairwells on the first and second floors. The building features a concrete foundation, brick and stone walls, as well as wooden beams and wooden floors.
- Estimated value: \$302,000

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