

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

Oro African Church Restoration and Preservation Underway

Oro-Medonte, ON – With over \$90,000 raised in cash donations plus \$171,000 in provincial and conditional federal grant funding, the Oro African Church is on the mend! The approach to this project is around preservation and restoration. It is more than just restoring the church to a certain date/period. It is about restoring and preserving its cultural heritage integrity while recognizing all the work that has been done over the years, which is now part of its history.

“Many people see the church as more than just a building or structure, they connect with it in a much more personal way. Whether it ties to their cultural roots, religion or for its historical significance, the Oro African Church has brought together many people of diverse backgrounds. This is what Canada truly represents and we are delighted to have such a gem in our community to share with the nation,” said Mayor Harry Hughes.

The Township has also received in-kind donations for services and potential contract work. For instance, the archeological assessment currently being conducted on the Oro African Church by the Archeological Research Associates (ARA) team is being done at no cost to the Township. As is the engineering services donated by Steenhof Building Services Group.

The ARA team have been onsite digging and looking for artifacts and physical evidence inside the church and surrounding the building. The assessment will help ensure any of the in-ground works involved in the restoration do not disturb unmarked graves.

The Township is working under tight deadlines with Parks Canada. Further plans include raising the church to pour a new, more secure foundation tentatively scheduled for the end of October. Followed by work to be completed on the exterior envelope of the building by the end of November. This will help ensure the exterior of the church is protected during the winter months while work is being conducted on the interior.

The anticipated timeline for completion is Spring-Summer 2016 with a grand opening event to celebrate our fundraising efforts coming to fruition.

Oro-Medonte is a diverse and beautiful community with a central location in Ontario. A community of 20,078 full-time residents, Oro-Medonte covers a land area of 61,000 hectares, stretching from the northern border of Barrie and Lake Simcoe to the southern fringes of Orillia and north to Tay and Severn Townships. For more information, please visit our website www.oro-medonte.ca.

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Township of Oro-Medonte Media Release

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