

# Diamond Schmitt Architects

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **FEDERAL PARLIAMENTARY BUILDING DESIGN APPROVED**

Toronto – The design by Diamond Schmitt Architects/KWC Architects in Joint Venture to transform Ottawa’s century-old train station to become an interim home for The Senate of Canada has been approved by the National Capital Commission (NCC). The grand Beaux-Arts structure on the Rideau Canal that became the Government Conference Centre in the late 1960s will see its architectural features restored and public access return when it opens in 2018.

The building will house The Senate while the permanent Chamber in Parliament Hill’s Centre Block undergoes a decade-long renovation of its own. The renewed facility will accommodate offices for Parliamentarians and their staff and committee functions.

“The rehabilitation of this heritage building will preserve and bring to light many architectural details lost during alterations in the late seventies,” said Martin Davidson, Principal, with Diamond Schmitt Architects. “The building will once again animate a high-profile intersection in Ottawa along Confederation Boulevard and adjacent to the Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage site.”

The east addition will provide a new public face to the previously unfinished façade following the demolition of the Corry Building decades ago and later, subsequent renovations. It is reimagined as a modern intervention, informed by the geometry, proportions and materiality of the existing Beaux Arts façade.

Built in 1912 to serve as Ottawa’s central train station, the building is an extraordinary example of Beaux Arts Classicism. The renovations will reintroduce the processional route through the building while restoring the major public spaces including the finely detailed General Waiting Room and Concourse.

The renewed spaces will house the Senate Chamber, Senate committee rooms and parliamentary offices and restore interior design features of columns, arches, large Diocletian windows and vaulted plaster ceilings. The Library of Parliament will conduct tours of the building, allowing the public in for the first time in decades.

Other elements of The Senate move, which has an overall project budget of \$269 million, will make the building universally accessible and more functional, with new elevator banks and staircases to connect the north and south blocks. Structural, mechanical and electrical systems will be brought up to current codes. State of the art IT, broadcasting and lighting enhancements will position the building for many more decades of renewed use.

Diamond Schmitt Architects ([www.dsai.ca](http://www.dsai.ca)) is a leading firm of architects based in Toronto with an international reputation for design excellence and sustainable design solutions. An extensive portfolio includes academic buildings, performing arts centres, libraries, residential and commercial buildings. Equally extensive is work completed for the healthcare sector, with life science facilities, research laboratories and hospitals.

For more information on Diamond Schmitt Architects, please contact:

Paul French

Director of Communications

[pfrench@dsai.ca](mailto:pfrench@dsai.ca)

Phone: 416 862-8800 ext. 454

