

County project kicks off

[NEWS](#), [TOP STORIES](#)

Byxbe Campus to serve as one-stop shop

By Gary Budzak - gbudzak@aimmediamidwest.com



Pictured is a rendering of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office Administrative Building, which will be built on the county's new Byxbe Campus at 1610 state Route 521. Delaware County Sheriff Russell Martin points to a rendering of the new sheriff's office building, which will be built at the new Byxbe Campus. To his right is Delaware County Commissioner Barb Lewis.

Gary Budzak | The Gazette



Wall and ground were both broken Tuesday morning for the new Delaware County Byxbe Campus at 1610 state Route 521, Delaware, in Brown Township.

The former north campus of the Delaware Area Career Center (DACC) will become the new home of government agencies that are currently spread throughout various buildings and neighborhoods in the city of Delaware. This one-stop shop will improve efficiency between departments and lower maintenance and operating costs, county officials said.

"It means a centralized location for several county offices in one location," said Brown Township Trustee Connie Skinner. "It's providing an important customer service to our residents, businesses, and community partners by being so close by and convenient."

The existing empty DACC building was constructed in 1974 on 64 acres in the southwestern corner of Brown Township. Former DACC Superintendent Mary Beth Freeman was on hand at Tuesday's event and was praised by Commissioner Gary Merrell for the "win-win" of selling the north campus to Delaware County for \$1.7 million in 2017. This was followed by the consolidation and expansion of what was the south campus on

U.S. Route 23. Merrell said that Delaware, Ohio's fastest-growing county, will have a population of 260,000 "before you know it," and the campus is important to its long-term future.

In 2017, the commissioners adopted a 10-year facilities master plan that included the Byxbe Campus Project. Over that time, county facilities were upgraded, the opening of the new courthouse occurred in 2017, and properties it no longer needed were sold off. Merrell said the final major piece in that plan is the campus.

Delaware County Commissioner Barb Lewis said the site's namesake is Moses Byxbe, an early 19th-century settler who helped in the planning of the city of Delaware. She felt Byxbe would be proud of the planning and preparation that went into the new use of land he may have trod on all those years ago. The current campus planning is in the hands of Gilbane Building Company who will lead in the \$40.7 million construction, with design by M + A Architects. Both firms have offices in Columbus.

Wearing hard hats and safety vests, several people took up a sledgehammer and put dents in the drywall that those who attended DACC would have seen upon entering the front double doors. With that "wall-breaking ceremony," the existing 140,000-square-foot building will undergo renovation. When completed in the summer of 2023, it will house the county's Building Safety and Facilities Management departments, the Engineer's Office, the Regional Planning Commission, the Regional Sewer District, as well as the Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District and The Ohio State University Extension offices.

There was also a groundbreaking held inside the building, since the ground outside was frozen. The ceremonial silver shovels were placed in a small mound of dirt laying on top of a tarp near where the wall was dented. The groundbreaking was meant to signify that a new 34,000-square-foot building will also be built on the site, which will house the Delaware County Sheriff's administrative and patrol division offices. It is also expected to be completed in the summer of 2023.

Delaware County Sheriff Russell Martin said, "There's no reason we shouldn't have the best sheriff's office in the state of Ohio."

Both buildings are expected to be operational by next fall, the county said in a handout at the event.

Readers may recall that the Tri-Township Fire Department also broke ground on the former DACC north site in November 2020. Tri-Township needs to move its station on Sunbury Road due to the Point Project work at the railroad tracks. Fortunately, the new home will only be a mile away.

The site may also be the future home of the county dog shelter, it was said at the event.