

<p>'As a former two-term councillor, I would like to make the following statement.</p> <p>The Downtown Chatham Centre rehabilitation project is an intriguing "concept", but at this point, that is all it can be considered. It is most definitely not a plan, nor I hope is it a done deal, unless it is the product of secret backroom negotiations.</p> <p>At this point, there are just way too many unanswered questions to take the idea seriously. For starters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- we don't know how much this will adventure will cost taxpayers;- we don't know lease versus ownership details, and which is more cost-effective in the long term;- we don't know what, if any, impact or value this idea brings to communities beyond Chatham;- we don't know what will become of the existing civic centre, cultural centre and library buildings; and what the sale of buildings and/or property will deliver to taxpayers to help offset the cost;- we don't know what becomes of the downtown firehall;- we don't know (and frankly think the idea is preposterous) how you fit a 4,000 seat arena, a city hall, a main library branch, a museum, an art gallery, a sports hall of fame, a climbing wall, a hotel, a memorial courtyard, and adequate parking on that particular property and do them all justice, especially when the library, art gallery and museum have been asking for years for more display and storage space, not less.;- we don't know what provisions are being made for environmental controls and other necessary standards of care for the collections of the museum and art gallery, such that all third-party certifications and federal/provincial funding requirements are protected;- we don't know if the community needs or can support a 4,000 seat arena, or what its programming potential would have on the Capitol Theatre and Kiwanis Theatre going forward;- we don't know the fate of Erickson or Memorial Arenas and what their sale or decommissioning would return financially toward the bigger projects. <p>These are just a few of the nuanced issues that must be entertained, answered and communicated before a project this large can be considered further. As it stands right now, this appears to be an 'everything and the kitchen sink' half-baked proposal that is sweeping and overly ambitious.</p> <p>I am all for public-private partnerships but never forget that the private side of the partnership is not doing things "simply out of the goodness of their hearts or their belief in the community", which is certainly how this project has been framed in local media and by our chief cheerleader. While I know and respect some of the investors involved, and they are successful and competent business people, there is always a profit motive, and taxpayers will be the largest customer of this investment.</p> <p>More importantly, a "concept" of this significance, which will alter the face of Chatham's downtown and the operating landscape of our entire municipality permanently deserves robust consultation and engagement with the community and user groups.</p> <p>This consultation must be considerably more than what an online questionnaire or discussion group can provide. This consultation must directly engage specific user groups, notably those serviced by the library and cultural centre. And, without question, any Council discussion, deliberation and decision must happen in open Council meetings held in person, not in the brutal inaccessible remote format that has already well overstayed its necessity.</p> <p>And finally, something this large should not be rushed to be finalized prior to this fall's municipal election. Political expediency should not be the goal. Doing what's right and possible for the community and its citizens is of paramount importance, not any one politician's desire for legacy. This really is an election issue.</p> <p>In other words, slow down.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>wondering what is going to happen to the business that are already in the mall? Midwives office they need to me in a place that everyone women can be able to get to the office and they also need to be close to the hospital.</p> <p>Also think that it would be nice to have another place other than Walmart to shop at. Not having any shopping stories here in town make people leave and spend money in other cities and not Chatham. Also not looking forward to driving out of town for the two min ring cleaning that I have to do two times a year so my warranty that I paid for wont be void.</p> <p>Also just another thing that they think will give families something to do together! guess what kids do not want to go to our LITTLE chatham museum unless it get way BETTER.</p> <p>Maybe should have thoughty about what chatham as a hole would want and not just what these few men want!</p> <p>this commenting is most likely a waste of time because at the end of the day money will take more than any one of our vioces ever will</p> <p>I like the idea of demolishing the Downtown Mall. It is an ugly eyesore. Since we don't own it, however, we shouldn't assume the responsibility for another white elephant, so we can pay to demolish it and build another white elephant. How about we repair what we have already, and not build more white elephants.</p> <p>First of all I have to say Thank you, Thank you, Thank you Rob Myers and the other members of the group that is planning to change the face of Downtown Chatham for the foreseeable future. Amalgamating City Hall, Chatham Library, The Cultural Centre and the Chatham Museum into the former Sears store is a great idea. The then old City Hall could possibly be changed into condos. The city does lots of buildings that it needs to take off their books. Particularly the Memorial Arena just needs to be bulldozed. The 4,000 seat will be a great for the whole county bringing in concerts, hockey, curling events, soccer and more. They could shut down King St and have the Farmers Market there. Make it a weekly event to bring people Downtown. We need to get behind this with all our might !! It needs to happen. It will create jobs that we so dearly need in Chatham-Kent.</p> <p>This project has not been well thought out. First of all we already tried to get a Junior A team here. That never happened. They should have built a twin pad arena at Thames Campus. That never happened. These so called investors think the idea of moving all these ideas downtown have a lot of pipe dreams.They are part of the investors for the former Navistar property that's still sitting vacant. The citizens of Chatham and surrounding areas can not afford to pay taxes on any empty buildings in Chatham. We have two arenas in town that need some repair work.Some of our roads are in need of repair. By the way council, what are you going to do with the extra 100,000.00 dollars that you get back from renaming these bridges. It's a joke. I will still call them the 3rd and 5th street bridges. Wake up council and concentrate on more serious issues.</p> <p>A decision should be deferred to the next council. Current council cannot make any promises as to what will happen after the election. Maybe the CC can be sold to a private interest group who can turn it into an Arts Centre with a smaller theatre and rehearsal space and storage areas and studios</p> <p>I so look forward to a revitalization of downtown Chatham, and with the backing of this amazing group of people, it can happen! They have the vision and the heart to bring life back to the downtown area. The design looks fantastic and offers something for everyone. Hoping and praying this comes to fruition! Sending a huge thank you to this group of caring, talented, and energetic professionals!</p> <p>As amazing as the new development in downtown Chatham looks, I think it's important to separate its private vs. public aspects. My comments are regarding a new municipal administrative office building, a new main library branch and a new arena. Decisions about the rest of the downtown development will be made by the group of investors who own the property.</p> <p>No matter how many behind the scenes discussions have taken place between the municipality and the developers to come up with this proposal, it's the thousands of Community Partners who are taxpayers and voters, who need to be heard and to have their concerns and questions answered thoroughly before any decisions are made.</p> <p>I ask our mayor and council to get all the facts and to engage the communities of Chatham-Kent in meaningful discussion. Adding comments to this website is just feedback - one-sided communication. It is only one tactic in a complete public engagement strategy that should be as broad and inclusive as possible for such a large and expensive project, with such wide ranging implications.</p> <p>For far too long, I have been ashamed of the appearance of our downtown. All the boarded up windows at the downtown mall, broken windows does not entice anyone to visit our downtown. We have a lot of municipal buildings that are in desperate need of renovation and repairs. We have an arena that is the laughing stock to any visitors. This is truly a visionary idea! Looking forward to this becoming a reality. To the team that came up with this idea. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!</p> <p>Where is the firehall going to go? Rebuild the civic centre maybe incorporating the existing building and the vacant lot next to the Kent Club. Let's make use of the valuable riverfront property, public docks etc. Chatham on the Thames. If the DCC was a viable business plan then the developers would move ahead and make it happen instead of relaying on taxpayers to fund it. Entertainment complexes arenas rock walls are the flavour of the day in the same way that the downtown mall was in the 80's. This plan has no "hubs" to include the rest of Chatham Kent in fact they are fighting to keep their offices open. Our legacy project shouldn't leave our children and grandchildren cleaning up the mess.</p> <p>First off let me say that this project is the jumpstart that our downtown core desperately needs. In my opinion this area of the municipality has been sorely neglected by our current council and leadership and should be a constant source of revenue for core businesses, as it once thrived and can and will be beautiful once again. If the design and vision reflect the finished project we can celebrate our rebirth of the downtown core that I remember growing up. In recent years many aspects of King Street from William to the 3rd street bridge have fallen into decay such as old lamp posts, abandoned storefronts left in various states of decay by neglect, cracked sidewalks, etc.. all the things that make other cities similar to ours beautiful. As the example of Stratford is always shared I will reflect on it once again and if you've never been you should. I worked and ran a business on King St. for many years and know what it can be. So as I applaud this project we need to kindly remember the destruction of our beautiful Tecumseh Park Gardens and realize that as we desperately need revitalization we also need to preserve what little we have left of our historic/iconic buildings related to arts and culture. The preservation of the Cultural Centre and Public Library are two excellent references of buildings that need to remain part of creative groups that rely on these facilities such as Theatre Kent. If the Municipality has no need for them then this project will have no correlation with Arts and Culture in CK and we can only hope that they can be preserved. Enough damage to our history has already been done let's have an open discussion as to why we don't need to make it worse and work together to preserve our history while ensuring a brighter future for all of CK.</p>	<p>Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p> <p>Ward 6 - Chatham</p>
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<p>Fantastic!! This is a great opportunity for our community and I support this.</p> <p>It will be interesting to see what the financial commitment from the Municipality will be in the long run however ensuring that our community continues to grow comes with an economic investment that is necessary.</p> <p>We are so fortunate to have community minded investors such as this group.</p> <p>Exciting!</p> <p>I am grateful that this team has chosen to invest in Chatham-Kent. This project will breathe new life into our downtown core and will bring new jobs. I look forward to hearing how it will come to fruition and whether payment by The Municipality, at least in part, will come in the form of a land swap for the properties that will be vacated when they move to this new site, namely the Civic Centre, the Library and Cultural Centre. No matter what, the citizens need to get behind this to ensure its success. One thing I'd like to see is an area (in that open area outside, between the old Sears and the former mall) that's similar to the spot at Gretzky's winery in Niagara that has a pond/fountains in the warm months and an outdoor ice rink in the winter months with seating all around it. I envision it as a great spot for families and friends to gather for some fun, and think it would be utilized year-round. Thank you to the visionaries who have the ideas AND the money to make this happen and who are willing to take this on. There will always be naysayers but I support this plan and look forward to hearing more details as they become available. #TeamCK all the way!</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>There are no better partners for downtown redevelopment than these local, civic-minded people with a record of success, sensitive to heritage. Kudos to them for investing thought, time and money on a proposal to replace a model of failure in downtown Chatham's mall. Let us not repeat the mistake of rushing to embrace whatever new proposal is presented, that lost us valuable heritage a generation ago, and landed CK with the mall in the first place. Consider starting questions before settling on yes, no, or yes-with-adjustments.</p> <p>What is the primary goal of the ice surface: entertainment for an audience, or nurturing local athletes? Is the emphasis for-profit, or for community enrichment of developing figure skaters and hockey players? OHL appears unlikely for CK's population and proximity to other teams. Twin pad design appears to be preferable for community use, such as tournaments and competitions. Leamington, a smaller centre, features a twin pad facility.</p> <p>(Transparency here: perspective from the one-third of CK residents who do not use arenas.)</p> <p>Who is the landlord responsible for new storefronts? Whose burden would vacancies be?</p> <p>What will the Municipality do to strengthen storefront success? Approve mixed-use zoning to develop housing for upper storeys of storefronts to increase the walking population? Tighten up developments on the edges of the city so that big boxes are required to fill a downtown storefront if they build a big box?</p> <p>What are the space needs for the Civic Centre using a contemporary lens? Work models have changed for office workers. Municipal employees have learned to work remotely during the pandemic, and the expectation of full-time office occupation during work hours is outdated.</p> <p>What is the square-footage comparison for current and proposed library, museum and gallery spaces? What are the demands for future library floor space under the ongoing requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and how do they fit into the proposed space? Museums and galleries require large areas for storage of their collections not currently on display. How are they accommodated? Curation requires specific temperature and humidity levels for conservation of materials. Lighting for displays is exacting and costly. Are these requirements factored into the proposal? They must be met to maintain eligibility for funding from higher levels of government.</p> <p>The Kiwanis Theatre. It is absent from planning, while its home in the Cultural Centre is lost in the proposal. It is the ideal size for use by the community to develop expression in theatre, dance and music. Small productions are lost in the size of the Capitol Theatre, and the rent is too high for small dance company recitals, the Music Festival, and Theatre Kent. The Kiwanis is a true theatre, with sloped auditorium flooring, wings, dressing rooms, lighting, etc. The only remaining theatre for use by the community, if the Kiwanis is lost, is in Bothwell. Support of community artistic development is important, just as community athletic development is.</p> <p>The place of heritage in the downtown proposal is mixed. It is excellent that storefront development is designed to be compatible with Chatham's Victorian streetscape. It is an irreplaceable loss if the public loses the Cultural Centre, with its Heritage designation.</p> <p>Environmental cost is ever more pressing. Costs are measured not only in dollars to retrofit, beside dollars to build. Environmental costs are incurred when the beams and facades that support present buildings are wasted to be broken and moved into landfills. Congratulations to the developers for making use of the bones of the Sears building. Reservations on anything that loses what might be maintained well, or adapted for better function.</p>	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
<p>I called Chatham home for a number of years so I'd like to provide a bit of insider/outsider perspective. I think one priority should be the art gallery space and the community programming that goes along with that such as the classes and creative making spaces that go along with it. Art creates culture and culture brings economics through tourism and community activities. I can't emphasize enough what a gem the Thames Art gallery is to the city. It should be a cornerstone of the new proposal. And the variety of courses and summer programming offered In It's maker/creative spaces is unlike anything else offered around the area. Why is this not being championed? It is unfortunate that that mall was built in the first place. It is a behemoth of a building-heavy, closed and unwelcoming. A fantastic gallery filled with art and a vibrant active creative space would contribute in a positive way. Art=culture=fiscal dollars spent by tourists. Art classes=exposure to try new things=creative thinkers=better in school and future jobs. The last two years of COVID have taught us that we need more in our lives. Please rethink this plan and expand the gallery and creative studios. You are so wrong to cut</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>I'm all for it let's get it done. This will bring people back to Chatham and will put Chatham Kent back on the map. It will also give local families things to do with in the city and make downtown beautiful again. U have my vote</p> <p>I don't not agree with tax payers paying to build a new arena for a hockey team I do not see any benefits for anyone living outside of Chatham All we see is our services get cut in the rural areas and Chatham needs to have everything</p> <p>If investors want a new arena let them fund it If private investors won't build it that's because it's not profitable. So why should we the taxpayers be left with another financial drain similar to the capitol theatre Enough is enough Thankyou Dave Vaughan</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>While I am supportive of the majority of this plan, I am skeptical that key information is being left out. Once again it seems the city is trying to push a new arena on tax payers while ignoring the arts.</p> <p>As someone who has been a huge advocate for the arts in Chatham-Kent over the past decade, I know first hand what an uphill battle it is in this city. While other cities are embracing the performing arts as an important revenue generator and cultural gem for their cities, Chatham would rather do report after report on more sports.</p> <p>The Kiwanis Theatre is really the only medium size venue in the municipality and for many, it's the only one that's decently affordable. You cannot just have a one size fits all with the Capitol and call it a day. That venue is too large for many small town projects, who either can't afford the cost, or don't require that many seats.</p> <p>The Kiwanis Theatre should be not only kept off the chopping block but the city should actually INVEST in these assets. For those of you who have been around for the whole "new seat" promises know exactly how committed the city is to this venue.</p> <p>- Devon Hansen Owner, Chatham Music Academy Music Director, St Andrews United Church</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Great Bold Vision For Downtown Chagham Kent. Will # 1 FireHall Remain at King & Second Sts. ? Will the Consortium takle Over City Hall for Condos along the Thames River.?</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>What about an indoor playground or area for younger kids, specially when it's winter or raining or very humid hot summer days when it's too hot to be outside(like today June 15th). It would be a huge hit, us parents are having to travel to Windsor or London to be able to let kids play at an indoor play area. Please consider. If you did a poll for popularity I can guarantee is would have phenomenal feedback.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham

We all know that this is the dream team for revitalizing Chatham, and I'm super excited to see them taking on this project.	
My main concerns is the cost being owning vs renting the city hall and library. How much will this move cost tax payers?	
My other concern may be an empty theatre. We had a really hard time getting the Capitol Theatre off the ground, and now we want to add another theatre to the area? I feel like this may not be the place, especially since there isn't enough parking for 4000 people in the downtown area, unless we plan on adding about 2000 more parking spaces downtown.	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
My, not so concern, but hope, is that maybe we see more indoor play places for young children and not just teenagers.	
All in all I'm super excited for this project and what it means for the future of downtown!	
Of what benefit to the public is moving these facilities ? This is obviously just bailing out Real Estate speculators who made a foolish buy. Will Chatham never learn ?	Ward 6 - Chatham
Is there the possibility for members of the community to provide an anonymous survey? Most projects have offered this option and I think this would be appropriate for a project of this nature. Thank you for your time.	Ward 5 - Wallaceburg
So if we build a new arena- which I was never on board with as our community has many other more important needs if it will raise our taxes- it needs to be done properly- with room to grown and expand- NO room in the downtown core- parking and traffic will be an issue- already the capitol and cultural center for concerts. Chatham themselves can't even afford this= Want to build an arena- do it RIGHT- double ice pad so hockey tournaments and skating competitions so we can host them in one location- swimming pools, water slides, childrens play place, indoor sports fields, climbing walls, go karts etc etc... downtown could be used for indoor entertainment center- like laser tag, something like the wild zone use to be- glo in the dark mini golf, escape rooms- there is not much for families or teens to do here anymore- downtown is not the place for an arena. And we NEED more affordable shopping- the downtown stores are fabulous but over half our area can NOT afford them- we need shopping for children and teens. and HOW much will this cost the tax payer- already most of chatham kent is struggling right now to pay their bills- many seniors can not afford to live- How many of chatham will support this when it is open? I was talking with many people who have never and will never go to the capitol as they just can't afford the tickets in the first place. And all the events I have been to at the Capitol over the years have never been sold out- they said build it and they will come? Well I have not seen any sold out shows- most I have talked to said the same when they went. I have been to downtown cores and hate the traffic and congestion- We do what we have to do and leave- all the times I drove to Budweiser gardens- many times over the years we have never once stepped foot in one of the stores or restaurants down town- We stop on our way there. many other options for downtown area- not a fan of the municipality offices and buildings moving there either- how much will that cost us?? VS fixing and repairing the buildings we have?	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
The whole arena downtown is not a good thought-out plan- I was never in support of a new arena- BUT if you are going to do it DO IT RIGHT _DOUBLE ice pad- so we can host big hockey tournaments and figure skating competitions- never has chatham been able to be on the list to host a skating competition as we don't have a double ice pad- swimming pools, fitness rooms, rock climbing wall, childrens play place, indoor playing field, trampoline park etc etc.. downtown is NOT the place for an arena- already congested and parking will NOT be easy- We already have 2 theaters - what about them???? We need more entertainment for family- family fun zones- stuff for teens to do- laser tag, go karts, childrens activities like the wild zone- we never did get to go to the escape rooms as covid hit- would love one of those again. We need BETTER shopping in chatham- for children and teens and even us parents clothes shopping is very limited- seems mostly low or high end- we need more " mall" stores in chatham so we don't have to drive out of town always to shop for our kids- shoe stores are limited here. I also hate to see the museum and library up town- They are perfectly fine where they are- .. and like someone else said- the library is easily accessible for people- I don't want to park in a parking garage to just go to the library. And what about the rest of chatham kent? The samll towns lose out again- why not make this fabulous new double pad arena in blenheim or ridgetown- make chatham leave chatham instead of small town people having to drive to chatham all the time	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
Chatham kent can NOT afford or keep this operating- We Can NOT afford for our taxes to go up again- seniors and low income families can't find housing, seniors can't afford to live and wait times for senior apartments are 2-4 year wait. IF taxes go up again they will be homeless as they just can't afford to live anymore-- HOW many chatham kent people have been inside the capitol theater? we have gone to just a couple shows- because the price is too high and most of the time the theater is half empty. So you will do what you want to do anyways but think for ALL of us not just the priveleged who want this- think of those already struggling to pay their bills and can't afford taxes to go higher for this- now if you build more affordable housing in all small towns for those than taxes will be doing something for the good	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
Yes this is a great idea live it! Now with that being said I want to see some better financials and split of who owns what As it would be easy for anyone to come to council and say hey we're are going to build u the building of your dreams your going to tax fund it and then pay is to rent it that's a great deal anyone would sign up for Now if the deal is they build us the new library and city hall and they get the old library and city hall even swap and no rent owed to them then I am totally cool with the idea I do love the idea of a new rink but we should not be renting from them for any purpose as we would still own two rinks	Ward 6 - Chatham
I'm happy something is being considered with the downtown again maybe this time the hype will be achieved , as we remember the downtown mall was the answer to our problems , then the capitol theatre was going to bring big entertainment and people downtown and the river front was going to bring people and tourists downtown we know these were all failed but had lots of hype and promises. I fell for all of them cause I hoped it would . I'm less inclined to be so gullible this time let's be honest no OHL team is coming to Chatham ever , no big name concerts or entertainment is coming to Chatham ever downtown arenas barely survive in big centres with 4 times the population. So let's talk about what really might be successful here a indoor water park with slides and rock climbing? Maybe . I'm open to suggestions let's just not get railroaded down a tunnel vision plan where only a big empty arena sitting where once stood a big empty mall .just my thoughts thanks for starting a conservation on this cause we know something needs to be done .	Ward 6 - Chatham
Love the idea of doing something bigger in the downtown. 100%.	
What we need though are a lot more details and this is not something that should be rushed into approval for the sake of an election.	
Questions that come to mind: what's the actual cost of moving the entirety of city hall? That's no small project. What about records/archives and staff parking?	
How are we going to accommodate parking and traffic for a 4000 seat arena? Parking is already hard downtown and about to get harder because Boutin now has a sign up suggesting the parking lot is going to be office space. Where is the planning department in this?	Ward 6 - Chatham
while I am at it, how the heck are we going to fit all of the proposed spaces on the mall space? even with knocking down most of the mall that's a lot of things in one space, even with multiple floors.	
I would suggest that planners look to do things that "don't already exist" in Chatham Kent in this space, rather than pull things out of existing facilities. I know Ck wants to unload buildings, but my fear is that by pulling stuff out of these buildings, they'll be left with empty buildings that are hard to unload. if we put new and unique stuff downtown, that will float all boats and the revenue on these other buildings will go up as more people will visit chatham downtown more often.	
The proposal for Downtown Chatham Centre looks good in general, BUT what about the Kiwanis Theatre? Nothing has been said about relocating or including it in these plans. As many comments have already been said, money has been included in all ticket sales for the last 10 years or so as part of a Theatre Improvement Fund - what happens to it? Where are community groups like Theatre Kent supposed to perform? TK has been very active for over 40 years involving and entertaining the people of the entire municipality - even with all of these dedicated volunteers, we still cannot afford to use the Capitol Theatre for most productions due to expenses being tied to the size of the venue - the 4000 seat venue mentioned in this plan will definitely NOT be affordable. Sure, it's nice to have the larger venues with all of the bells and whistles but the Kiwanis Theatre is a much more intimate setting that should be maintained. Other concerns - what is the rush? Why does this current Council need to make this decision when some of them might not even be part of the Council in a few months?	Ward 6 - Chatham
I respectfully request that the decision regarding the Downtown Chatham Centre be DEFERRED until more information is gathered and questions answered.	
Gina	
I think it's a great concept, but it's missing some things. An indoor pool would be great, the YMCA is too small for public swims and having to travel to Blenheim or Wallaceburg is difficult at times. An indoor play area like Windsor or London has would be beneficial to the community as well. We also can't afford to have our taxes go up even higher because of something like this, we already pay ridiculous high taxes for a municipality of this size.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Great project. Please, for the love of all that is good in the world, do NOT drag your feet. Be thankful that a group of individuals are willing to invest millions of dollars into our downtown. They have done the consulting. The concept is excellent. Please please please don't mess this up. 100% approve. Get it done.	Ward 6 - Chatham
I think this is a very positive proposal. Bravos to the team proposing this! I love the way the promenade effectively restoes Sixth Street (as a pedestrian walk) with the Cenotaph as the focal point, nada a continuation of the path into Tecumseh Park.. So, what about restoring Market Square - or a least space for a vibrant market to showcase local produce?	Ward 4 - North Kent (Mitchell's Bay, Pain Court, Dover, Dresden)
My other comment is a larger comment to the City. Facilitate the development of high density residential downtown close to this site, to create lots of walking traffic.	
Chatham is fortunate to have the Thames Art Gallery (TAG) and the cultural / community programming that goes along with it as part of a system of regional public galleries. TAG is currently an excellent gallery with exhibition spaces, studios and workshops, and it's been a pivotal institution for me as an emerging artist and now in my mid career. Any move really needs to preserve and enhance the multifaceted nature of this place. Fostering public engagement in the arts is about more than attendance, it is about providing places and opportunities for people to participate, learn, share, and actually engage with cultural activities whether through exhibitions or learning a new skill in a studio class. It's also crucial that these opportunities are accessible economically and open to diverse populations and ages. The trickle down economic benefits of healthy and active cultural institutions should not be overlooked, nor should their role in creating a healthy community of critical and creative thinkers be underestimated. Galleries like TAG are about far more than just a lovely space to see art; if this plan goes forth I urge the city to fully consult and make room for studios, workshops, and yes even storage to make TAG even better rather than limiting its potential.	Ward 6 - Chatham

<p>This is 100% on the mark and checks all the boxes. A place to entertain and be entertained. Every age group, male and female, all income levels while giving a sense of pride and excitement. Name one other project that accomplishes everything that the Mayor and Council have been wanting to do for over 10 years. There are always other projects and always will be so it's time to move forward on this one and say we have the courage to grow and be recognized. This is such a positive game changer.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>What's the rush???? Please defer a decision on such a significant and potentially costly project until after a new council is in place and we have been provided with detailed plans and costing and an opportunity to provide meaningful feedback. The current DCC is a rather sad remnant of what was initially conceived, but there are too many unanswered questions surrounding this new grandiose proposal to be able to make an informed decision about where our future tax dollars would be going. How are all the entities named going to be accommodated in this space: library, city hall, 4,000 seat arena, museum, art gallery...really??? What is going to happen to the Kiwanis Theatre--is it just going to be abandoned? What happens to groups like Theatre Kent requiring a smaller venue than the Capitol Theatre which does not appear to be fully utilized now. Parking downtown is already inadequate when there is an event on at the Capitol. Studies have shown that the municipality needs a new arena, but a twin-pad arena that is part of a multi-use sports complex with good access to the 401 would be more beneficial and attract tournaments. Again, what's the rush...take time to make a carefully considered, informed decision on what is best for the entire municipality.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>It's great seeing local entrepreneurs put their money where their mouth is, and step up to help support their community. A lot of neysaying here say this is a bad idea or not possible but the suces of these entrepreneurs says otherwise. Sometimes big risks means big rewards, we want to see a future for families and activities in our community. The DCC has made many mistakes and is really just abandoned at this point. If the owners would like to start over with that property that's an incredibly valid idea. We need to look to the future, and have proper space for commerical property to invest in Chatham, we need room for tech start ups and an education backing for them. It'd be great to have a large library learning center to invest in these things and I'm sure St. Clair College could have interest, they already have many programs that people could benefit from. With a larger library more community programs and family events could be implemented. The only thing I am not sure about with this is the entertainment factor. We desperately need to have more entertainment and family friendly activities in Chatham- Kent that are actually great activities however I am not sure about capacity of following through. The problem is that we have plenty of dead spaces around these types of things currently and not enough people hosting and having these events and getting involved currently. Having an OHL team requires a lot and the majority of them with the exception of the London Knights are actually profitable, many are running at a deficit or break even. It would be sad to see that enforced onto citizens taxes when arguably any of the entrepreneurs have much experience with what an OHL team would really entail. As far as getting entertainment here, the capital theatre is already struggling yes but that doesn't mean more can't be done. I think this is a great idea and concept in theory, and yes we need to do something of this nature and revitalize downtown, but what is the best course of action here? I would like to see other propositions especially in regards to truly feasible family entertainment. I also I think building that corner space by sears and making it taller and a pillar in the community would be fantastic. I'd actually love to see a vertically integration building for the library, long with commercial rental space.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>I appreciate the soon-to- be Community Partners' efforts, but am disappointed with our Mayor, administration and councilors that this project appears to be a done deal. The time to ask for input was way before now. (Yes - the partners asked for suggestions...but citizens were not apprised of discussions that happened behind the scene, involving moving municipal services into the plan. THAT is a BIG discussion topic.) YES the DDC needs a re-do! Moving services that are already downtown adds nothing new...use the space for a recreation and retail hub instead. If you MUST move our library, incorporate it in that hub...but use the current library building for additional space for a proper museum of local history and artifacts. Question - where will the fire hall go? Comment: There is no concrete plan to keep the Kiwanis Theatre, which is a gem with historical significance for our community. (along with great acoustics) The Mayor HOPES someone will make good use of it... which is not reassuring at all. It is unfortunate that our last chance for input is today at 4 PM, especially when info on COSTS are not available until Aug 8 ! The video speaks for unity, and it is very well done. I think we have to all bear in mind that Chatham is not THE downtown for Chatham-Kent...all of our smaller towns have their own charming down towns. Every community can use a boost. We have to be VERY mindful that tax dollars spent must be spent fairly and wisely, with shared benefit, input and the support of most of the citizens. This project coming at the time closures of Municipal offices/services in every community but Chatham, Blenheim and Wallaceburg will not sit well with many outside of Chatham.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Defer this decision until new council is in place. This is a long term, big investment for our community. Please look past your re-election 4 year cycle and make a good decision with time for the generations to come. What would your great great great grandchildren need (not want) from a facility like this? Make it sustainable and environmentally responsible and "free" for all!</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>This is a good idea for our downtown core, but must be well thought out before moving forward. A modern, central library close to all municipal services is a great idea. Removing one of our historic theatres? Terrible idea. Growing up, I regularly attended performances both through school and other events at the Kiwanis Theatre. It would be absolutely shameful to lose this cultural gem. We need to do more to promote the arts, not less.</p> <p>The ideas are great in principle, but need to be fleshed out more. We are one of the only communities around without a modern twin-pad arena. Our answer is then a single 4,000 seat arena. That is badly thought out and does not reflect the modern realities of sports. If we want to attract hockey tournaments, a 4,000 arena is not going to cut it. For example, the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League hosts a yearly inter-conference showcase. For years, it has been held in an area with much more modern facilities and multiple ice pads in one facility. We are shooting ourselves in the foot of we move forward with just a single pad 4,000 seat arena. Not to mention, the Municipality partnered with the owners of the Chatham Maroons less than 10 years ago to build expanded state of the art dressing room facilities. Are we just throwing that away with this proposal? There is also a lot of local hockey history that we would be throwing away with this project.</p> <p>In short, great idea in principle, but the "how we get there" remains to be seen for what we need.</p> <p>I am glad we are talking about investing in our downtown, an area we have neglected for far too long. Other cities have revitalized their downtowns doing projects like this. I am glad we are finally discussing bold ideas.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>This is a tremendous opportunity for our municipality. To have a committed group of private investors, with a consistent track record of giving back to our community, is a great thing for all. To revitalize our fatigued downtown infrastructure with help from private investors such as Rob Myers at a time when our municipality is growing makes sense from many perspectives. Citizens will receive new, state of the art and environmentally-friendly buildings where they can visit, shop and participate in activities downtown. Quality of life improves for all as does the tax revenue base for the Municipality as it recoups revenue through business taxes. As more people move into the area, many more will see C-K as a quality destination for visiting, shopping and dining. This is a preferred alternative to spending millions to repair, upgrade and/or maintain existing, tired buildings. Please don't let this opportunity pass us by.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>This is an excellent proposal which will revitalize downtown CK. Lets's keep the focus on "why we can" rather than "why we can't". Opportunities like this don't come along very often.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>This property has been a mistake from the beginning, never should have been built, but money talks, anyway a new arena is needed not a new library, this was voted on by the people of chatham many years ago arena won and we got a new library, don't screw us over again, forget the library build the biggest arena possible on that land</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Tax payers will be paying rent all the time if they do this move and who is going to buy the buildings if they move out? No mention of the theater where will it go. They are going to cram everything into the Sears building??? There will be growing pains and you want to do it right We need a better Museum ..just look at Wallaceburg they have a good one. We need a new rink for sure ...but with the price of gas no body is coming to Chatham to see a main event ..when they can stay home in Windsor or London or Sarnia Try filling a 4000 seat arena all year long and where is everybody going to park? All in that garage? I go downtown to the Satellite restaurant once in awhile and have a hard time finding a place to park now...and its dead downtown..! Trying to fit everything down there and to do it right and have the parking and thats if people come like I said before, price of gas. Right now with inflation we could be headed for a recession and cant sell these empty buildings now let alone more empty buildings from the civic center and Library etc. Just look at all that money that was spent on the Capital Theater and for what? I hope we have learned our lessens from that mistake...and common sense and looking ahead is what is needed Sure we all would like to see downtown do better ..but that was in the horse and buggy days Look ahead to the future not just a quick fix to fill some investors pockets Think this out, we almost had the money for a new arena built right in the right place until covid came along If the Civic Center was built right in the first place we wouldnt have to even think about moving Hold these builders accountable and go after them for the repair bills get it in writing .10 million to fix it up sounds like a lot of money to me and somebody will be padding their pockets with that amount but it will be cheaper in the long run after moving everything out taking another loss on trying to sell everything paying rent forever that price will go up...like everything else So everything gets move in one spot ..no place to park and trying to get people to come to this entertainment center year long Who will be in charge of that? More costs hidden costs Might as well split the money that you will spend and give it to the people of Chatham Kent so we can buy Lotto tickets or spend it at the Casino .. Just use common sense think ahead do things right for a change You are showing it now by having this Public Feedback like when they wanted to move our one hospital to St Joe...and everybody knew that was a bad idea ...no place to park to begin with. Fix the City Hall and do it right the other places dont need to be moved ..there is nothing wrong with them Give us a entertainment center but put it in the right place ...not down town there is now room to grow if this thing takes off like everybody hope it does then you will be able to expand in the future and not just trying to put a bandage on downtown to fix something that was made for the horse and buggy days. Do it right think ahead!</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham

<p>We are fortunate in Chatham-Kent to have businesses and government collaborate to create exciting new opportunities for its citizens. However, these anticipated developments do raise questions and concerns. Specifically, it is unclear what will happen to the Kiwanis Theatre.</p> <p>The Kiwanis Club of Chatham-Kent and the Chatham Kiwanis Music Festival have been associated with the Kiwanis Theatre for several decades. It is a midsize multi use live performance space boasting excellent acoustics, a sloped floor, dressing room, lighting and comfortable seating. Thus, it has been attractive to not only the Chatham Kiwanis Music Festival's Grand Concerts, but also to many community groups including Theatre Kent and the Sears Drama Festival. The city's own website notes the Theatre is "also rented by a number of national and regional performers who represent professional entertainment".</p> <p>The Capitol Theatre, while impressive, is simply too large and too expensive to be a realistic substitute.</p> <p>Further, the Kiwanis Theatre holds cultural value and significance and is part of the fabric which makes Chatham-Kent special.</p> <p>We ask that Council provide more clarity on the future of the Kiwanis Theatre. We respectfully request to be part of that process to determine that the Kiwanis Theatre or a comparable facility be available in Chatham-Kent.</p> <p>Sincerely, Julie Collins Co-Chair Chatham Kiwanis Music Festival On behalf of The Kiwanis Club of Chatham-Kent</p>	Ward 3 - East Kent (Ridgetown, Thamesville)
<p>Looking forward to some revitalization for the downtown core of Chatham. Please consider including an indoor soccer facility that can be used during the fall / winter months. This can be utilized by both youth and adult teams / leagues. Soccer is the 2nd most popular sport in CK, behind hockey. Having a facility for year-round soccer would allow us to compete with the bigger cities more, such as London, Sarnia, and Windsor.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Question: What will happen to the existing facilities?</p>	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
<p>An exciting proposal from a great group of community minded individuals. A few important details need to be flushed out for the community and council in order to make an informed decision.</p> <p>1) What happens to old facilities and if sold to this group what is price/value? 2) Fixed Price Contract on new facilities build? 3)What are operating cost and revenue assumptions for new entertainment complex?</p>	Ward 3 - East Kent (Ridgetown, Thamesville)
<p>Why is there no projected cost to the municipality yet? Can the current downtown infrastructure carry the increased load? If not what is the cost of those upgrades? What is the timeline to build this project? How much intrusion to the downtown will this project cause? How will all of this construction effect the ability of police, fire, and EMS to operate. How will all of this construction effect traffic flow in the rest of Chatham? What operational efficiencies will be gained from this project and how will those gains (if any) be reallocated? With the DCC parking lot being retained by the "community partners" for other development how will the municipality accommodate the increased need for parking after selling the current civic center and it's parking garage? If there is no funding from senior levels of government how will the municipality pay for it's portion of this project? Who decides what "turn key" really means? What happens if the "community partners" are unable to finish the project? The June 13, 2022 report to council had no robust debate on this project. Will this be the norm or can we expect more than that at future council meetings?</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Waste of taxpayers money.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>July 8, 2022 To CK Municipal Council and Mayor Canniff: Please consider this letter as a response from the non-profit board of the Chatham Kent Arts and Culture Network (CKACN) to the proposed Downtown Chatham Centre redevelopment project.</p> <p>We also respectfully request that this letter and the concerns/questions noted be considered as a deputation letter to be read at Council when the Survey results are reviewed.</p> <p>While we, in general, support the overall redevelopment of the downtown mall area, we have the following questions and concerns regarding the impact on Cultural programs/operations and facilities, as a direct result of the changes proposed.</p> <p>Our general concerns are as follows:</p> <p>What are the overall implications to Cultural facilities throughout all CK regarding programming, maintenance, upkeep, and annual budgets? What are the net and gross tax implications in a projected spreadsheet format for the overall project? Which cultural facilities will be closed and sold? In one of the many consultants' reports regarding a large arena complex, it was noted that it would take 55 major events per year to maintain operational costs. Has this been explored as to the viability of this 4000-seat facility? What are the impacts regarding Memorial and Erickson arenas?</p> <p>Our specific concerns/questions relating to the Chatham Cultural Centre and overall CK-wide cultural operations/facilities/programs are as follows:</p> <p>On July 14, 2003, CK Council passed by-law no. 174-2003 designating 75 William Street (Kiwanis Theatre and Thames Art Gallery) as a property of cultural heritage value and interest. If this property is sold as surplus, will Council continue to support and uphold this designation?</p> <p>What are the implications for storage and display space in the new facility for the Thames Art Gallery and CK Museum, and how will that compare to what we have now in the Chatham Cultural Centre? Will the space allocations for both be enlarged to accommodate future growth and ongoing acquisitions that are required to maintain existing cultural funding?</p> <p>Will the national standards and upper-level government funding for operations be retained? Will Council approach the Federal Governments as to maintaining the National Gallery and CK Museum environmental standards that will allow for continued federal funding if the facilities are moved?</p> <p>Will the provincial/federal environmental standards required for the collections be retained?</p> <p>Will the volunteer committees/advisory boards for the two facilities be consulted as to the move and future design/space requirements?</p> <p>Will the Provincial and Federal ministries be consulted as to standards and capital funding opportunities for the culture and recreation components?</p> <p>What will happen to the community-driven ARTspace facility and will the ARTspace volunteers be consulted?</p> <p>Could we save the Kiwanis Theatre space and continue with the 400-seat conversion from the current 700 seats as promised? A \$1.00 surcharge per ticket sale was set up (over 10 years ago) to cover costs. What happens to this fund if the Kiwanis Theatre/Chatham Cultural Centre is closed?</p> <p>The new downtown project should be deferred to next council. If a new civic centre is to be incorporated in this downtown proposal what is going to happen to the fire hall attached to the old civic centre? My fear is a new 20 million dollar Taj Mahal (fire hall) will be built on the south side of the rail way tracks. Maybe if firefighters are made to work 8 hour shifts instead of 24 hr shifts a shed style building could be built for less than 1 million dollars. In regards to a major A hockey team please get a long term contract signed before the taxpayers of chatham Kent subsidize the junior A team, 6 years ago council was told that 60 events a year were needed to break even.</p> <p>Leon Leclair</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Just another oversold financial boondoggle waiting to fall in taxpayers laps! Still waiting for the "crowds of people" coming from Toronto to the Capitol Theatre, the millions of dollars from the Chinese impressed by the St. Joe's Hospital/nursing home or the Railroad to Nowhere creating 100's of well-paid jobs in Wallaceburg. There may be 100,000 people in Chatham Kent, but the folks out in Kent have their own community hubs in Blenheim, Highgate and Bothwell etc.. Isn't Chatham running out of services to cut in Kent to pay for another "dream" project in the small town of Chatham? Those 4,000 seats may be filled once at the "grand opening" and never again. Downsize our bloated and overpaid administration, repair the current Municipal Building, repair the Erickson arena, attract some decent jobs and shopping opportunities and take off the rose-coloured glasses. Linda H.</p>	Ward 4 - North Kent (Mitchell's Bay, Pain Court, Dover, Dresden)
	Ward 6 - Chatham

<p>My concern is accessibility if all these services are combined in one large area .</p> <p>Right now I can park my vehicle behind the library and walk just a few steps to the door to enter the building. At the Civic Centre , it is just a few steps from parking spots to the front entrance. The Thames Theatre has direct access from their parking lot to a side entrance to avoid the stairs at the main entrance. The Capital Theatre has a drop off access at the front door and parking very close by the front door . The Memorial Arena also has a drop off at their entrance with plenty of parking close to the entrance .</p> <p>In rainy or snowy winter weather , better access may be a priority consideration . Many people are uncomfortable or unable to walk on icy walkways to access this large area . Has wheelchair accessibility been factored in to these plans ? Even small children are unable to walk long distances to gain access . Many people now avoid malls because of the walking involved especially if the one store where they want to shop is in the middle of the mall. . The strip malls with direct access to each store seem to be much busier with customers.</p> <p>At the moment I do not see where any consideration has been given to make this project accessible to all ages and their mobility differences .</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>When we are looking at possible reduced services outside of Chatham and liquidating buildings to save under \$200,000, it seems infathomable that this should be considered at this time. Wonderful concept but I don't think rubber-stamping it now is appropriate at all.</p>	Ward 4 - North Kent (Mitchell's Bay, Pain Court, Dover, Dresden)
<p>I think this would be Amazing for Chatham-kent as long as it goes through. Chatham kent needs this, I've heard so many times how people want to move out of Chatham because it's a dump and there nothing here well here it is and now people wanna turn it away unbelievable, Go for it!!! Make a difference in our Community for once, something to look forward too and new things to do, more things for our Children and Family's. 1 request make it a double ice pad!</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Dear Mayor and Council:</p> <p>The decision as to the future of the former Downtown Chatham Centre (DCC) is in your hands. My hope is that all council can realize, recognize and be in cohesion when it comes to doing the right thing for downtown Chatham. It is long overdue that we take back our beautiful street and welcome visitors from far and wide.</p> <p>Progressive thinking is required....let's let go of the days of the past which seems is always brought up. Be it Harrison Hall, the Capital Theatre or any building for that matter. Nothing lasts forever and the former Sears space is a rock solid building with over 88,000 square feet. The city hall is just 33,000 square feet and is in dire need of massive renovations. It was built as a city hall for the former city of Chatham, not for an amalgamated municipality. Let's get as much under one roof as possible. It isn't just the Library, there are a lot of other departments such as Economic Development and the Health Unit that should be under one roof.</p> <p>I say, unabashedly, that there is no doubt a move to a renovated DCC space that is brand new is the right move. The money saved and sale of the properties will far exceed the purchase of a new 88,000 square foot building....built to the specifications set by council.</p> <p>Do I agree with the entertainment aspect, not necessarily, however if it includes some fun activities as stated, like rock climbing, roller skating and other things "TO DO" for our children and grandchildren....I am all in.</p> <p>I have never believed in the force feeding of positivity. Positivity comes with prosperity and seeing that things are happening that are moving our communities within Chatham-Kent forward. Every community deserves to prosper....and....I hope council will remember that this is something that we need as a community. We have people from all over moving here....let's keep them here....and bring even more.</p> <p>A modern facility is what we need at a central and easily accessible space. Let's recognize our past, while embracing a very bright future.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>I believe that if a group, such as this, has a vision to improve, revitalize move the downtown core in a positive, instead of stagnate, direction everyone should be on board and make this as seamless as possible. There is far too much red tape, bickering and stalling when it comes to being progressive. This includes elected officials and people with pet peeves. Our downtown needs refreshing for businesses and citizens alike. It once was, and could be again, a beautiful place to go if we don't stand in the way.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Just do it I can only remember how long and how much time was wasted in Windsor about the new hospital please just make the decision to do it as we need something positive thanks to those with this great idea</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>This project would revitalize the downtown. This multi-use facility would be a plus for many citizens. Thank you to this group of investors who want to back such a project in their hometown.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>Congratulations to a committed team of investors for getting more conversations about ways to revitalize Chatham.</p> <p>But this conversation does not Imagine Chatham KENT.</p> <p>Like a great black hole, the concept for the DCC will suck the amenities from surrounding communities.</p>	
<p>Here is a small example of how Chatham works. A generous Grant was received to build 10 pickle ball courts in CK. Consultations were done and it was proposed that five different communities (including Chatham) would each get two courts. (Erieau was not on the list because when their residents wanted pickle ball they raised money to build their own courts.) Four of the named communities were delighted to be on the list - but Chatham wanted at least six courts. Surely being given two "free" courts they could follow the Erieau example and raise funds themselves for additional courts. But that is not the Chatham mentality.</p> <p>Now as Chatham contemplates bigger grander municipal offices, small personal-service municipal centres in surrounding communities are in danger of being closed. A sop of "a person on a desk in a library" is being offered as a possibility. No thank you.</p> <p>Please make this trend of "everything in Chatham " an election issue. Let's Imagine Chatham-KENT in October.</p>	Ward 3 - East Kent (Ridgetown, Thamesville)
<p>This is absolutely a game changer for our municipality, and will bring positive change for generations to come. Bringing people to the core, with something to show off will really be a source of pride for all residents. Kudos to the developers and I hope that council can get this passed as soon as possible.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>I was born and raised in Chatham, and after 8 years away, I've moved back to start a family. I've always been optimistic about the future of the town, and it feels so good to have things to look forward to. When city friends ask why I've moved back, it's great to have projects like this to point to. It finally feels like Chatham is on the cusp of really great things. I am extremely optimistic about this project.</p> <p>I am most excited about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- a modern central library- tying in historical architecture to maximize small town charm while providing urban amenities- roller skating!!!! I can't understate how much I want a space for roller skating- climbing walls, hopefully appropriate for adult climbing enthusiasts <p>Room for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- if we want to maximize parking, there also needs to be alternative transportation options so that people who don't have to come by car choose not to. There should be, at minimum, plenty of bike racks worked into the design. It would also be great to work with the city on bike lanes downtown, so that families can safely travel to community spaces while enjoying outdoor spaces together and promoting a healthy lifestyle. Like most urban centres, Chatham should have community bikes for rental in the downtown. This would also help address drinking and driving in the city.- the roof in the current design is a waste of space and missed opportunity. I'd LOVE to see a rooftop terrace with a community garden. Studies show that green roofs reduce heat at the street level and provide efficient insulation for buildings. It would be beautiful to enjoy a rooftop view of downtown Chatham in a green space. This space would be amazing for photo opportunities and maybe weddings. It could even be an urban agriculture opportunity where food could be grown for the food bank, or rented by community members who don't have a plot for a veggie garden. I could also see a cafe or restaurant or bar on the rooftop, like you would see in big cities. More ambitious still, it'd be incredible to also have a community pool on the roof, like some hotels have. Something like that would be truly innovative for a community hub.- the green space looks sparse and I'm concerned about pavement heat. I'd like to see more trees to help recover our Carolinian canopy coverage, and flower beds with native plants. People will want to spend more time in spaces that are cool, well-shaded and aesthetically pleasing.- I see benches but I think there should also be bistro tables to encourage meeting with people in the community or sitting with a coffee and a library book- would be really excited about sustainable design, like rainwater collection and large solar panels- streetlights should be selected to minimize light pollution to preserve Chatham's starry skies- phase 3 should absolutely be residential and not more hotel space. There isn't enough downtown housing (or housing in general) and any successful downtown needs people living there.- there should be drinking fountains for people to fill their water bottles- there should be street access to public washrooms so that children and people with disabilities especially can fully enjoy downtown and festivals without the panic of not being able to find a washroom. The washrooms should be open late at night to prevent people from the bars from relieving themselves in the streets.- one of the storefronts should be a small grocery store with local goods and fresh produce so that people downtown have food within walking distance- the cultural centre needs bigger studios with more large basin sinks and shelving, and lots of natural light- I'm concerned about the fate of the Kiwanis theatre if everything else is moved. I think it's an essential community resource for smaller productions.	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>The project as presented in the Chatham Daily News looks fantastic. Chatham needs something like this to make the city presentable to additional new investment and residents. We should be grateful that we have this group willing to invest this kind of money in Chatham. Our new CAO should crunch the numbers and if it makes sense - full speed ahead. Chatham needs this.</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>What is the big rush? Why does this huge project with its huge financial commitment need to be rushed through like this? We are undertaking this project when we cannot protect our local environment, and we cannot even plant a few trees.</p>	Ward 4 - North Kent (Mitchell's Bay, Pain Court, Dover, Dresden)
<p>I think this is a excellent idea to revitalize the downtown of Chatham the mall is a embarrassment and I'm so glad to see these things happen to the community well done</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham

They certainly do a slick sell job but obviously this is the prelude to begging for money. Have we all forgotten the Capitol Theater debacle? I heard many similar promises to that fiasco and all it became was endless trips to council for more money. Our taxes are already high enough and the skyrocketing property values are going to drive them further. Now we want to add this? Yes, the needed repairs on municipal buildings are going to cost. Perhaps even the tens of millions of dollars this ad campaign video suggests. But this proposal is going to run into figures that will make ten million look like chump change.	Ward 6 - Chatham
This is definitely a game changer for our municipality the vision Rob and his team have for this downtown core is incredible.I am looking forward to the next steps in this amazing revitalization and rebirth of downtown Chatham.	Ward 6 - Chatham
It appears good but need details on costin and impact on existing services	Ward 6 - Chatham
It has been said many times that a new arena complex would be a twin pad. The city would then close both Memorial and Erickson because of high renovation costs. Would this new concept then mean the we refurbish one of those arenas after all?	Ward 6 - Chatham
CK is our Community and we are all Partners in determining how our tax dollars are spent to build or renovate the Civic Center, Main Branch of the Library and an arena. In order to exercise our right to civic engagement, the proper procedures must be followed, with plenty of time for feedback, consultation and planning. This could be a great project if the people of Chatham-Kent know all the facts. Let's consider the following: 1. Defer the decision to do anything with this project until a new council is in place and complete plans and costs can be shown to the community with time for community input. 2. Decisions for this project need to fall in line with the community needs of all Chatham-Kent (not just Chatham, but Bothwell to Wheatley; Wallaceburg to Ridgetown). Don't close other centres community hubs and arenas and expect people to come to Chatham. 3. Explain to all taxpayers as to the costs, what we get for our money and the real possibility of property tax increases. 4. Impact on various community groups: Theatre Kent, Artspace, minor sports associations etc that seem to be left out of this proposal. Paul Bourdeau	Ward 6 - Chatham
It's a definite that our downtown mall needs revitalization, but at what cost? And are the proposed moves of municipal buildings into the space a wise choice? There are a lot of questions that need answering before this becomes a done deal. I live in the The Tecumseh Park neighbourhood and am impacted by many summertime events there, not by choice. If there is any chance that the proposed project impacts my neighbourhood such as overflow parking for the facility, I'll be totally against it. If you were in or near the park last weekend, you'd know what my issues are. The park may as well become a paved parking lot. If events held in the park can be transferred into the proposed complex and adequate parking be provided, then different story. Maybe then Tecumseh Park can be reinstated as a "park" with green grass, trees and flowerbeds, maybe even a water feature as it had back in the early 2000's. The fair way to decide the fate of the proposed project would be to put it on the fall ballot.	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>A few thoughts and concerns on the proposed transformation not just in the downtown but everywhere surplus to requirement properties are to be disposed of in Chatham.</p> <p>It is to be hoped this is not a done deal because there are too many unanswered questions.</p> <p>The mayor says he doesn't know what the project will do to local property taxes. He does have a dilemma. If no studies or reports have been produced how would he? Why would the municipality pass ratepayer dollars to the investors that own the property if the ratepayers (that are the lifeblood of the city) are not guaranteed a return, say in lower taxes or a dividend cheque?</p> <p>Why does the city need a 4,000 seat arena paid for by taxpayers? If an OHL team wants to play in Chatham they can make proposals to the city. Chatham shouldn't be chasing a team hat in hand. How many ratepayers could care less if an OHL team comes to the city? What percentage return on the millions of taxpayer dollars for an arena can a hockey team possibly provide?</p> <p>Has an actual costing been done to show how much money will be saved but selling off "surplus" properties and condensing their function into a single location or is it just, "Oh we'll save money."?</p> <p>Will the services provided on those properties be as accessible in a downtown location? I believe 150 surplus properties were mentioned. That's a lot of real estate and worth a fortune in value paid for by ratepayers over the last 180 years. Will the sale of those properties cover the cost of the downtown project so the ratepayers are not out of pocket? Should they be used for that purpose? Will there be excess funds that could go back to ratepayers as lower taxes or all CK citizens as a dividend cheque?</p> <p>How will the transactions of those properties be policed to make sure the ratepayers receive the full market value and who will decide what that value is? Real estate in Chatham has risen significantly in the last few years. It would be a boon Chatham's finances and the ratepayers that live in it, and financed it for that 180 years. By all means let the developers and other connected parties purchase those properties at fair market value. They may even bid in competition to each other as there seems to be lots of money to be made in property development in Chatham. One hopes no accords are not struck to provide only a single interested party bidding on each property.</p> <p>This undertaking is much more important than putting an arena downtown. Handled properly it could be a wonderful opportunity to benefit everyone in CK not just a select few.</p> <p>Thank you for this chance to address these concerns in a public forum and one that will be closely examined by council before decisions are undertaken. V Pfaff</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
Don't get me wrong I think Chatham needs this but 1) not sure where the \$ would come from 2) having 4,000 seats for concerts/arena great idea but what happens to the Capitol theatre then since it holds no where near this many seats? 3) wondering if the "plan" goes far enough in regards to being green...like a green roof, solar. Have that "big" roof that would be the new civic centre why not use it	Ward 6 - Chatham
Personally, I think that we are jumping into something sight unseen. Does something need to be done to bring people back to the downtown core? Sure, but is this really the right project for that area? I have my doubts. I don't think this has been carefully studied, researched or planned, and it's going to end up being another large expense just like the Capitol Theatre and a lot of other projects in Chatham.	Ward 1 - West Kent (Tilbury, Wheatley, Merlin)
We may need an arena, but this is not the place to put it, it should be some place highly accessible to in town players and guests. This would be better suited just off the Bloomfield close to the Industrial Park where people have access right off the 401, two major hotels are near and where they won't be congested in the downtown core.	
From what I can see, this project just lines the pockets of Tetreault, Myers, Tsirimbis, Nydam and Bullock. They are truly the only ones that would benefit from this project which is why they're pushing so hard to do it.	
Dear Mayor, and council There are families unable to afford housing, unable to afford nutritious meals, working part time jobs at minimum wage. Our seniors are lacking appropriate housing and care. Libraries in our small communities being threatened with closures, schools needing upgrades to run safely. And yet you want to invest our tax dollars in entertainment and luxury housing. There are already great facilities available for both. If this group of investors want to take on this project, let them do so, but not with our tax dollars. It is a lovely concept, but not the responsibility of taxpayers. Time for some commonsense budgeting.	Ward 3 - East Kent (Ridgetown, Thamesville)
Huge thank you to this forward thinking team. This may be the most significant project Chatham will see in years. The team believe in CK and our community, let's not let this opportunity slip away folks.	Ward 4 - North Kent (Mitchell's Bay, Pain Court, Dover, Dresden)
It is great that we have these people who want to restore Chatham. Looks like it will be fantastic for our downtown. Ruth	Ward 6 - Chatham
Please don't put the library downtown at the mall site. Where it is right now there is easy handicap access(to the doors) for seniors and disabled. In the plans shown there is no handicapped parking even close to the doors of the site for the library. Leave the library where it is. This idea is just making it harder for people to access the library.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Very excited for this project, if anybody can do it, it's this group. Fantastic design. You can really tell a lot of thought and planning has gone into this, they have all of CK in mind.	Ward 6 - Chatham
I was never one for the idea of a just new arena in Chatham but I have to say this has to be one of the smartest proposals I have heard of for a very long time that has been presented to council ,It's definitely going to be a game changer for years to come for the entire CK A huge shout out the this fine group of investors as a team I've always been one for team work and just look at this as a great example of team work and we all could learn from this presentation and move forward with this as quick as possible Thank you	Ward 5 - Wallaceburg
While this proposal seems great I can't help but wonder what will happen with the empty buildings?	Ward 6 - Chatham
The soul of Chatham has been lost over the years always years behind other areas. Chatham-Kent needs a new heart and vibrant centre of togetherness and inclusion for all that come and live in the Municipality. Chatham-Kent is on the cusp of a vibrant future and about to see a population boom. We need this for our future. We have been passed over by traveling entertainment like Cirque Du Soleil and Disney on Ice because we have no venue currently suitable. We have lost out on OHL teams because of no plan or movement of such a wonderful Facility. I moved away from Chatham-Kent and came back because of Family. Having these in one location in the heart of our beautiful city would be massively beneficial the Entertainment Complex/Arena could be used for the international food court of a revitalized Festival of Nations similar to the original that used the old Armouries. It will bring new life to King Street and a draw for boats from the US to return to our docks on the Thames. As a Resident, this is absolutely 1000% a Must to draw people to our Historic Municipality. With Uncle Tom's Cabin, The Buxton Settlement 2 Provincial Parks, access to 2 lakes and Beaches, and various events in all points of our Municipality. The quote from the Field of Dreams film fits this perfectly in this time "If you BUILD it They WILL Come"! We must be brave and move forward with all aspects of this project for our prosperous future. Thank You to the project crew and the Partners for bringing Chatham-Kent out of the slump and giving us a glorious future. Simcha BenYsrael	Ward 6 - Chatham

I think that we should wait until the upcoming recession is over before we even think about this FIELD OF DREAMS. Spike	Ward 1 - West Kent (Tilbury, Wheatley, Merlin)
I am optimistic that this bold project may well work in such experienced and committed hands as those who have bought the DCC and wish to transform our downtown but I have a couple of concerns. The first applies to the increase in size of the proposed library which is 30,000 square feet from the current 22,960 square feet which is a modest gain of 7,040 square feet. When I was one of a number of former staff members who offered this suggestion, our idea was a much greater expansion that would allow dedicated study and quiet areas which don't exist in the present library along with a larger programming space that is not competing with other services. I would also like to see a larger local history area that would allow the Ontario Genealogical Society space and the local history area to be kept in close proximity with more room for tables and appropriate equipment on offer. While many people may feel that these areas are large enough, there is great usage by individuals wishing to access family records and the local history index of births, deaths and marriages as compiled from the Chatham Daily News from 1841 on is a valuable and unique resource that doesn't exist anywhere else. The collection needs to be digitized as do the newspaper files but there needs to be a space allocated for this work to be done. The Children's area needs a larger programming space that can be used for Adult programs as well. It is currently cramped and uninviting. Staff areas have also been crowded of late and this is one area that should not be neglected as trained, individual help for C-K residents is most important. The Sears store was 72,000 square feet. The library's new recommended footprint is 30,000 square feet. Will the other activities be adequately accommodated? I can't picture the Library, Art Gallery and Museum all being located there with proper storage allowed for every one of these activities. I agree with the comments from the County Lady about the Chatham Cultural Centre as well. What is its fate? The community needs a theatre of this size for local productions that would be lost at the Capitol Theatre. It was once a vibrant place with many acts from all over the country on offer at a reasonable price. Finally, one of the features that attracts people to the downtown is an English style pub that is family friendly offering games of darts, quiz nights and local entertainment. Is there any provision for an attraction like this in the revised King St cityscape? As an organizer of local events, I would love to see a place like this locally owned not a chain that could partner with some of our activities in the downtown.	Ward 6 - Chatham
This should be an election issue and NOT pushed through before hand. Its too big a decision to be made in haste and without enough information. Our taxes are already going up next year why should they increase more to make 3 wealthy people even more wealthy!?	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
Excellent concept, and I hope it moves forward. Kudos to those involved.	Ward 6 - Chatham
seriously, going to bail out these guys for buying a dud, how the hell are you going to get in and out of the downtown when there is an event on at the Event center. Where are you going to park, parking garage not adquate, ANOTHER CAPITOL THEATER	Ward 6 - Chatham
Although I feel that downtown Chatham especially the old DCC and Sears needs a entire makeover, I feel it is very important that council do it's due diligence before committing to this project. I'm not certain a new library space is needed. I would recommend a proposal for more family oriented activities instead of an enlarged library. Parking would be a huge problem as well. When the Capital Theatre hosts something there is not enough parking available downtown so I can see this being a problem. One refurbished parking garage is not going to be adequate. This decision will impact generations to come. I believe council should defer this decision until after the municipal election. Haste makes waste.	Ward 6 - Chatham
This bold plan to reimagine our downtown Chatham center deserves full attention. Because the Community Partners are held in such high regard, and rightly, for what they have already achieved on King St. there is a perceived rush to judgment -- to accept the plan as it stands, as fast as possible and to begin building in the fall. Still, if ever there is a time to kick the tires and look under the hood it is now, before we sign on the dotted line. (1) 'What is the cost?' In dollars and cents? No one, publicly, has answered that. There are quotes for the refurbishment of existing (and soon to be redundant?) city properties that come to many tens of millions of dollars. But these may seem small change compared to the final tally of the proposed project, especially in these inflationary times. What is the cost to outlying communities should C-K bite of more than it can chew? What is the cost of losing the Cultural Center -- the Kiwanis theatre and the gallery and museum? It is a great cost, or loss, I say. (2) Everyone I've spoken to questions the need for a four thousand-seat arena. It is surplus to Chatham's immediate needs and by some estimates insufficient by OHA standards. There are seven hundred parking spaces onsite presently. Four thousand seats will need to double that. We must also consider the charm of a thing 'the right size' is not always the grandest size. The British parliament for example was designed purposely not to be able to hold all the members of parliament. This created a feeling of a full house. 'Standing room only' generates an enthusiasm a half or quarter-full house can only dream of. And what would be the savings between a two thousand plus seat arena and a four--thousand seat arena? And could those savings be better employed elsewhere -- to rehabilitate another existing arena for example? (3) The proposed stores along King St. -- so reminiscent of an earlier twentieth or nineteenth century Main St. model -- will face the same pressures that diminished the originals: Big Box stores and online shopping have not gone away. This nostalgic Main St. vibe works in downtowns like Stratford or Niagara-on-the-Lake (or Disney World) because of festivals and larger populations and attractions. Is the community ready to become landlord and come into direct competition with our tax paying property holders? How do we handle that can of worms?	Ward 2 - South Kent (Blenheim)
The new plan holds promise; it has generated enthusiasm. But this is an investment for a generation or two. And we must do our due diligence; get feedback from any of the advisory committees whose institutions are affected. Tweak and tweak again, kick the tires, look under the hood. Can all of this be accomplished by August 8th? No. While we have the power let's take the time to do this right.	
Defer the decision to do anything with this project until new council is in place and complete plans and costs can be shown to the community with time for community input. Decisions for this project must fall in line with other community needs such as Ridgetown, Bothwell and other smaller communities not just Chatham. What about property tax increases WE PAY THE BILL. Traffic will be a serious problem. What happens to the Historic Designated Cultural Centre, Capitol Theatre Tecumseh Park. Possibly we as taxpayers should vote on it in the fall election	Ward 6 - Chatham
How much money has been wasted in the Capital Theatre that will become empty once this project goes through? There was a proposal years ago for a twin pad area which is what is needed in Chatham at the former Navistar site that was turned down as too expensive. One seated area with no practice pad attached is a waste of time and money. Chatham needs to look no further then the Atlas Tube centre in Belle River for the model needed. Library, walking track, multiple rinks, gym and indoor pool.... all of what should and could be placed at Navistar.	Ward 6 - Chatham
This is great news for C-K! A great vision to bring life back to CK and the downtown core. Yes, there are questions to ask and due diligence to compete, but we fully support the concept. Thank you to this group for their pride and investment in C-K.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Wonderful idea, all in favour, a few comments though: - Let's go, let's be a leader, the past is the past, we don't make many buggy whips anymore, life has moved on - Hopefully the vision will unite most of north and south Chatham, most rural and urban C-K citizens, these north/south and rural/urban divisions have to end, we can't afford the costs associated with the divisions - We all knew a new arena would eventually be built just needed an acceptable vision to bring it to fruition - We all knew a replacement for the Civic Centre and Library would come, again just needed an acceptable vision - Ironic that the proposed new Civic Centre is slated for Harrison Hall site - I've lived in Chatham for over 45 years, parking in downtown has always been a problem, any proposal needs to address that, not only for the entertainment centre but also for shopping - Let's make sure that other C-K owned properties are sold and staff is consolidated, let's use technology to replace people and buildings in rural areas, again we can't afford the status quo.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Lovely proposal and great vision, using Chatham's best known voice in Greg Hetherington to really put the push on this project backed by the old boys club. But why aren't we asking a few more questions about how and why this has moved through council how it has? - where was the public Request For Proposal to open this same proposal opportunity up to other companies? - why is council entertaining the idea of paying rent to a single company without first allowing others to come in for the opportunity to do the same? - where is our Integrity Commissioner, Mary Ellen Bench, to look into why council is considering this offer without going through the typical council sessions for public debate? - How is it that a couple rich guys have a monopoly on our City Hall's motivations? - why will public tax payers of Chatham Kent be footing the rental bills of a private company?	Ward 6 - Chatham
"The community Hub will be CK's new library, art gallery, museum, and civic centre." This isn't receiving a third party's advertising proposal, this is sniffing the sheets before crawling in to bed with the big wigs, but without going through the proper processes we have in place to weed out corruption that is the job of a democratically elected council.	
It seems our elected officials are ooh'd and aah'd by their friends who already own most of the city. Why aren't they doing the ethical thing and making this proposal available to others so the citizens represented by council of Chatham-Kent can have a choice on what is actually best for them. Which this very well might be, but why aren't we upholding the same standards that is the foundation of our local government instead of being bought out by the almighty dollar?	
I live in the downtown area. I would like to be able to walk to markets in the summer that sell fresh local food. I would like to be able to buy my groceries without getting in a car year round. Please don't make it purely for tourists and people that live out by Walmart.	Ward 6 - Chatham

<p>Dear Mayor and council,</p> <p>if you build the world's greatest commercial center in the middle of the Atlantic ocean, it will fail. You need either a large local population to sustain it OR a large volume of through-traffic. Chatham has neither. If businesses buy space here and end up not being able to pay the bills, those businesses will close up shop. You'll end up with either a high turnover rate or a high vacancy rate which will end up making this a very depressing place that nobody wants to visit, basically making this whole project a monument of superfluous spending. You have to ask yourselves: what is Chatham all about? Ask why people want to come to Chatham "NOW", and build on those strengths. I get that you want to expand into new places, but people don't use the resources that are there NOW, so why would building a shinier version of what's available change anything? I see a general lack of anything unique (as in: anything that nobody else does well) in the proposed spaces which leads me to ask: why would people come here when there's a better version and more involved community (not to mention larger local population) for it a short drive up the road?</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
<p>My comments are regarding the proposed Arena / Entertainment centre.</p> <p>Another council term has come and gone and nothing has happened regarding Memorial Arena .</p> <p>It is appalling the way this has been handled over the past by previous Councils.</p> <p>Promises made , promises broken and Memorial Arena continues to be demolished by deterioration.</p> <p>Maybe the NEXT council will actually do something.</p> <p>So here we are election year 2022 and we have a new proposal .</p> <p>My biggest concern is what is this total proposal going to cost the citizens of Chatham. I say Chatham because the comments have already started that " Chatham gets everything , the rest of the Municipality gets nothing but still has to pay!</p> <p>Total cost plus my concern about the arena are my two biggest concerns.</p> <p>I am concerned about the arena proposal primarily as it relates to the Chatham Maroons?</p> <p>Memorial Arena has a capacity of 2,412 spectators, the new proposal as I understand is 4,000.</p> <p>The Jr " A" rumours continue to swirl however a minimum of 6,000 is required for a franchise to be brought to Chatham.</p> <p>What will the costs be to the Maroons and other users for ice time? Are costs going to double because size is doubling?</p> <p>Will the Maroons have a dedicated dressing room which they have now.</p> <p>*** Please remember that the current ownership paid half the cost plus looked after the building of the dressing room***</p> <p>Given the location and layout of the proposed complex will there be an indoor parking area for visiting team or entertainer motor coaches?</p> <p>What will happen to the Maroons if a Jr A franchise is moved to Chatham? In no other SW Ontario city that has an A franchise is there an arena that houses both!</p> <p>I sincerely hope that there are serious discussions held with the Szekecsy's plus other organizations about their requirements.</p> <p>The Maroon Alumni and the CSHOF have both invested heavily in Memorial Arena with their "Legends on Ice" and hall of Fame displays .</p> <p>Both should be moved to this Complex or to the next proposal that comes along!</p> <p>Is Federal / Provincial money available for this Arena complex because of the private / public makeup of this group?</p> <p>Do not let another term go by without a replacement for Memorial go by!</p> <p>If it does you could very well known as the Council that caused the Maroons to be moved to another smaller Community that already has a new modern facility just waiting for a Jr B franchise .</p> <p>I would love to be involved to be part of the process as it relates to the arena.</p> <p>I was the representative for the Torrie Family when the Thames Campus complex was being planned.</p> <p>But the Mayor and Council of the day screwed this proposal up and only one ice pad was built.</p> <p>We do not have a good track record in this City, please let this be the time we can celebrate the opening of a twin pad complex like the party is planned for the replacement of a new bridge.</p> <p>Sorry, I forgot it's an election year isn't it!</p> <p>Tom Heath</p>	Ward 6 - Chatham
I say do it! It only has benefits for our community and we've needed this for a very very long time. Kudos to this team for seeing the potential in our wonderful community!!	Ward 6 - Chatham
While the idea of invigorating the downtown core is exciting and certainly will attract business, the opportunity cost of this is the financial burden on our small community. This community with a growing elderly population and homelessness. Individuals on fixed incomes, and small businesses trying to make a profit. Where those who are just getting by will be further oppressed by inflation. Ideas and creating funding will be needed, as the cost of this can not lay on the average citizen who just cannot afford this.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Would it be possible to have some sort of overhead covered area between the Hub and the complex and perhaps a large area in front (king street side) of the community hub area.	Ward 6 - Chatham
It looks beautiful and I hope I can live to see these results.	Ward 6 - Chatham
Please find a way to make this project a go! It is exactly what Chatham-Kent needs. It is well thought out and includes something for everyone.	Ward 6 - Chatham
lets get this right.Lets not look back years from now and regret overlooking some of the important issues that might make a big difference in chathams future growth and economy. for instance if a 4000. seat entertainment center is built why not have all the facilities in place that might bring ohl hockey to chatham.i cant think of any better revenue that would bring tourism, and people downtown to businesses and restaurants. we certainly should have learned from the mistakes of the past.	Ward 6 - Chatham