



295 Rectory Street, London, Ontario, N5Z 0A3, 226-289-2838

November 27, 2015

Chair: Mayor Matt Brown
Members of Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee
The Corporation of the City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, ON N6A 4L9

RE: Expansion of London Optimist Sports Centre (BMO Centre): Request to appear as a delegation before the SPPC on December 7, 2015

Dear Mayor Brown and Members of the Strategic Planning and Priorities Committee:

First of all, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on celebrating your first year anniversary as a City Council. You have accomplished much in the last year and you are to be congratulated for both your hard work and your willingness to work together as you serve the citizens of London.

I also wanted to say how much we have appreciated the ongoing relationship we have had with the City of London over many years and to thank you again for all of your past support in helping make the BMO Centre one of the finest indoor sports facilities in the country.

As most of you will know, we started out with the `Dome` in the east end of London in 2004 and because of the tremendous need for an expanded facility and due to the generous support of the federal, provincial and municipal governments we were able to build a new facility at 295 Rectory Street . We have been operating at this site since 2011 and also continue to operate our original facility on Cuddy Boulevard.

We knew that the BMO Centre would be a fabulous facility but in many ways it has even exceeded our own expectations. To say that this is a popular destination for indoor sports is an understatement and we have been overwhelmed with the requests for field time. The BMO Centre is now essentially at capacity and our facility on Cuddy Boulevard is just about filled to capacity as well. We are grateful for the success that we have enjoyed and are proud of the fact that we are a volunteer-driven, non-profit organization that has proven itself financially sustainable.

With success however, comes challenges and due to exponential growth, we now need to expand the BMO Centre so that we can meet the ever increasing demands of the soccer community as well as a



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number of other indoor sports. This will become even more problematic in that we are also facing the imminent closure of the facility on Cuddy Boulevard.

As some of you may know, the construction of the BMO Centre resulted from a land transaction with the City of London that included a swap between the property we owned on Cuddy Boulevard and the City property at 295 Rectory Street. As part of the agreement, the City was also kind enough to include the added option of leasing the Cuddy facility for five years. That lease has now been extended for an additional year and is due to expire in May of 2016. Further, the dome structure on Cuddy is on its last legs and so one way or the other, we will soon be without this facility which currently serves around 1500 participants per week.

This brings me to my request to come before you to outline the exciting plans that we have for expanding the BMO Centre. Simply put however, this expansion will allow us to replace the two fields that we will be losing on Cuddy and to redirect the recreational participants currently using the Cuddy facility to the BMO Centre.

The cost of the expansion will be approximately 7.7 million with most of this funding coming from the London Optimist Sports Centre (LOSC). It is our hope that the City would be willing to provide us with a grant to help offset some of the costs of the new addition. This **one-time** ask would be in the amount of \$800,000 which we believe is a prudent investment in a first-class facility that serves thousands of Londoners and which will make the BMO Centre one of the largest, if not the largest sports facility in Canada. Your assistance will go a long way in helping us in our decision to move forward with this project.

In the next few days, I will be providing you with a two-page breakdown of the costs of the new addition as well as a summary of the benefits of the expansion and its importance to the City of London and to Londoners. In the meantime, I would be most grateful if you would be so kind as to consider my request to appear before your committee.

Yours very truly,



Tom Partalas

Tom Partalas

President, London Optimist Sports Centre