

May 1, 2023

Mayor Josh Morgan/Members of City Council  
City of London  
300 Dufferin Ave  
London, ON N6B 1Z2

Dear Mayor and Members of City Council,

It was a little more than 20 years ago when we, as Global Spectrum (now OVG360), led by Peter Luukko, partnered with Ellis-Don to create the London Civic Centre, LP (LCC) and established an incredible public-private partnership with the City of London, to develop a new arena in Downtown London.

We believed in London then and knew that a new arena would be a true gem that would bring world class entertainment to London and ultimately bring additional new development, and a new way of living in Southwestern Ontario.

Twenty years later, as operators of Budweiser Gardens, Peter Luukko, Brian Ohl, and the OVG360 team remain committed to offering a diverse lineup of the world's top live entertainment and sports attractions that bring visitors across Western Ontario into London daily.

OVG360 has been a part of this fantastic venue since groundbreaking when we operated as Global Spectrum, then Spectra, and now OVG360. We have always positioned Budweiser Gardens as a landmark of civic pride and community accessibility, promoting a sense of vibrancy and culture and providing a wide range of public sports and entertainment.

As the building recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, it requires a series of renovations and upgrades to adapt to fan expectations and demands, ones that will significantly increase new revenue streams and further enhance the guest experience, whether they be our patrons, the artists, the athletes, or the performers who make Budweiser Gardens their temporary home while entertaining thousands of guests each night here in London.

OVG360 recently completed six new arena projects across North America including a modernization of the arena in Baltimore. We believe it is imperative that we upgrade Budweiser Gardens to meet the growing needs of today's standards, enhance the experience for all users, and continue to attract the world-class events and musical superstars that have made Budweiser Gardens incredibly successful, and keep London, Ontario, on the entertainment map.

When the original contract was signed over 20 years ago, there was always an understanding that upgrades would be a necessity in the future. However, we have an excellent opportunity to accomplish the necessary betterments to enable Budweiser Gardens and the City of London to continue building on this incredible legacy the venue has established locally, nationally, and internationally.



OVG360 is known for causing a positive disruption in the live entertainment industry. We know what Budweiser Gardens means to the City of London and its impact on bringing thousands of visitors to London each year. And we know what a newly reimagined Budweiser Gardens can mean for London. It is time for the public-private partnership, and the City of London to once again work together to modernize Budweiser Gardens, which will have little disruption on business, but a positive disruption for London.

OVG360, which acquired Spectra and its predecessor Global Spectrum in 2022, is the leading developer of new arena projects, including Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle, WA; UBS Arena at Belmont Park in Elmont, NY; Acrisure Arena in Coachella Valley, CA; Enmarket Arena in Savannah, GA; the recently reimagined CFG Bank Arena in Baltimore, MD; and FirstOntario Centre in Hamilton, ON.

Our team is well versed on what upgrades are needed here, and with input from our recently opened arenas, we can bring insight, experience, and knowledge to help enhance Budweiser Gardens for the next 20 years.

To be cost-efficient, we strongly encourage the renovations to be a priority now, as delays could see prices continue to escalate.

The London Knights have had incredible success at Budweiser Gardens. This is mainly due to the Hunters' ability to attract top players, which will become more difficult each year as the teams' facilities within the arena have fallen well behind those of most other OHL franchises.

While most teams can offer players extensive exercise and training equipment to keep them performing at their peak, the Knight's players have limited resources due to space constraints.

An expansion of Budweiser Gardens will once again restore the Knight's reputation for having the best fans in the CHL and the facility to match it. Furthermore, a renovation to the Knights' facilities would also positively affect current contract negotiations, which will need to be approved by the City.

Throughout the last 20 years, Budweiser Gardens has hosted various high-profile events that have put London on the forefront of the Canadian Stage and internationally, as well! The 2012 World Figure Skating Championships, the 2005 and 2014 Memorial Cup, the Brier in 2010 and 2023, and the Junos in 2019 are just a few examples of such events; however, with each of these events, additional temporary infrastructure needed to be erected to meet the needs of the event. This also adds considerable costs to event organizers, as noted in the feedback received on numerous recent bids for provincial and national events.

To remain competitive with newer arenas opening and other venues undergoing renovations, it is imperative that we, too, renovate Budweiser Gardens.

The 10,000 SF of multi-purpose event space in the proposed expansion will alleviate the need for temporary infrastructure and reduce costs for the organizers, making London a desirable option to host future high-profile events again.



The upgrades in arena amenities and technology that have taken place in the two decades since Budweiser Gardens opened its doors have rendered what was once considered cutting-edge and best-in-class obsolete.

For example, concession stands have shifted from traditional counter service to grab-n-go technology, allowing for a better fan experience with shorter lines and increased revenue as more people can be serviced.

On behalf of OVG360, operators of Budweiser Gardens, we encourage the council to approve the proposed renovation plan for Budweiser Gardens. The benefits of this renovation are clear, and we must act now to ensure the continued success of our venue and the City of London.

We firmly believe in the City of London, and we know that further strengthening our public-private partnership, and with our partners at Ellis-Don, we can take Budweiser Gardens into its next phase and further change the landscape once again here in London.

We are prepared to once again invest in London's future.

Sincerely,



Peter Luukko  
Co-Chairman  
OVG360



Brian Ohl  
General Manager  
Budweiser Gardens



Randy Reymer  
Vice President & Area Manager –  
Southwestern Ontario  
EllisDon Corporation