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Mayor Dan Mathieson and Members of City Council:

We look forward to tomorrow's public meeting on the proposed Tom Patterson Theatre project, and are eager to hear feedback and perspectives from the public. In advance of the meeting, we wanted to offer you some background on the project, together with an outline of our efforts to mitigate any issues arising from it.

Project Background

Like all organizations that compete to attract tourists, the Festival's success – and Stratford's – cannot be taken for granted: we need to invest in making sure we can meet the needs of the future, not just manage day to day.

The current Tom Patterson Theatre falls far short of the standards that visitors and theatre-goers expect. Its structure is delicate, and the seating, front-of-house and backstage facilities are woefully inadequate. We seek to build a new complex that will rival the most beautiful theatres in the world. Retaining all the treasured intimacy of the existing venue but featuring improvements that will allow us to explore exciting new creative avenues, it will enable us to maintain a competitive edge on the international stage.

Besides the theatre itself, the new facility will provide spaces that will allow our important Forum, Laboratory, education and digital media programs to flourish. These beautiful new spaces will be available for use by the community during the Festival's off-season.

Requiring no investment of municipal funds, this project offers Stratford and its residents a unique opportunity to gain an important new asset. This stunning new facility, in its gorgeous setting, will draw a further 50,000 visitors, create an incremental 242 jobs (in addition to 552 construction jobs) and generate additional economic impact of \$13.5 million annually.

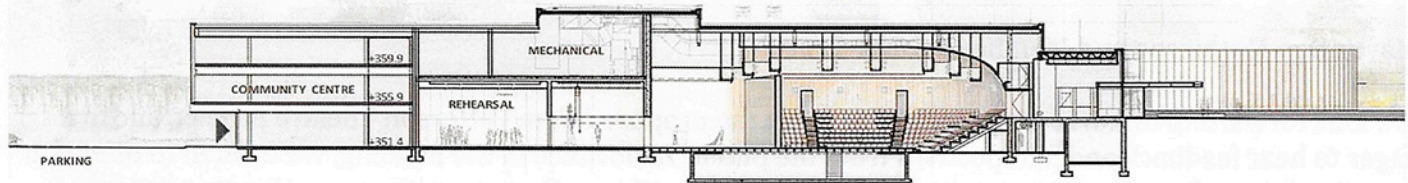
Answers to the community's questions about the project can be found on our recently launched landing page: stratfordfestival.ca/tptnews

Current Users of the Kiwanis Community Centre

The proposed new building requires a larger footprint than the current one. This affects other users of the site, particularly the Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association (SLAAA). From the start of our exploration of the project, those users have been uppermost in our minds.

The City of Stratford's proposed development of the Cooper site into a multifaceted, intergenerational Community Hub would ultimately provide a home for users of the Kiwanis Community Centre. Providing brand new facilities for all Stratfordites, from seniors to students, this visionary plan will transform what has long been a dormant plot of land into a vibrant centre for recreational activity social interaction and peaceful contemplation. Over the last 12 months, the Festival has worked closely with the Mayor and CAO in seeking funding for this transformational project.

Should the Hub not come to fruition, the Festival has explored a back-up plan. We have investigated the possibility of whether there is space for a new community centre immediately adjacent to the new Tom Patterson Theatre. Occupying 22,000 square feet, this facility would be comparable in size to the current Kiwanis Community Centre.



The Festival has also worked with City staff on plans to retrofit the Stratford Agriplex to accommodate the activities of SLAAA in the short term. The Festival's Board has committed to raising up to \$500,000 to support those custom-designed retrofits.

In an arrangement negotiated with the Kiwanis Club of Stratford, the Festival will offset the revenue earned through the concession booth for a period of seven years and provide some recognition for the Club in the new Tom Patterson Theatre. We have also invited the annual Kiwanis Music Festival to use the new Forum space that would be created there.

The Festival has met with the Stratford Lawn Bowling Club to explore the possibility of relocating the greens on the site of the Tom Patterson Theatre. The whole site needs to be excavated and the existing greens will certainly be disrupted for an extended period of time. City staff have brought forward the idea of relocating the Club to the Municipal Golf Course; this offers such benefits and synergies as the sharing of greenskeepers, clubhouse and storage, and the opportunity for cross-pollination of membership.

We have also met with the Rotary Club and with residential neighbours, and have made plans to relocate a memorial bench to the proposed new gardens (if that is desired). We are working hard to ensure the least possible disruption, in both the short and long terms.

Thanks for your leadership through the consultation process.

Sincerely,

Anita Gaffney
Executive Director

Antoni Cimolino
Artistic Director