

## Chamber Survey

### Burlington Performing Art Centre

Number of respondents: 273

#### Other Responses:

I am fully supportive but costs must be contained. Given what we have seen so far prior to detailed design it is unlikely that costs will not continue to grow. The question re other priorities is not an either/or question. We should have a performing arts centre but not at the expense of other priorities.

I think PAC is good, but just not right now, give it another 10-15 years. Our taxes have gone up 7% for the last 2 years (too much) and will only go up more with PAC. The hospital is more important right now.

I believe there is more opportunity for fundraising from business and individuals, which could help to reduce the city costs and tax burden. I don't think business tax should be increased any more than individual tax.

I am supportive of cost containment initiatives to free up cash flow before commitment to new costs.

This is one step in making Burlington the exciting and vibrant city that it could be.

Burlington has spent a lot of money on sports facilities over the years - it's time that Arts receives some funding too

I feel very strongly about having this in our community. As a single parent wanting to expose my children to major theatrical events I had to travel to Hamilton or Toronto, which in itself was expensive and time-consuming. I have already provided a donation to the City of Burlington in support of this project with the hope that others will also do the same.

There are other stages/venues in Burlington that are available for small events (up to 500 people) and very little demand for anything larger. There is only a nominal ancillary usage for this type of property and outside of building costs, the year to year operating costs need to be revenue neutral to be viable or acceptable. Finally, having events at the PAC, that run concurrently with any other Waterfront event will create worse parking nightmares than before the parking garage was built. All encompassing downtown event (Waterfront, PAC, Cultural Center, Museum etc) will be a nightmare and will not be viable on a long-term basis without additional City funding - thus creating more of a burden on the cities budget. How does the PAC rate in terms of good government when we are also facing funding infusions for road repairs, the McMaster campus funding, social services etc.

The Performing Arts Centre will make for a more vibrant city centre and the economic impact will be felt throughout our City. It is the missing "link" our community needs to complete our rich cultural chain.

The overages are already out of control. Burlington needs other important components in order to make it a world-class city. Like an upscale hotel for example. It is embarrassing to have international guests stay. We have to send them to Toronto. The PAC will only be used by a nominal percentage of Burlingtonians. I am strongly against it.

A great asset to the community. I wish the provincial and federal governments were quicker to confirm their portion. This seems to be dragging the discussion on unnecessarily.

Funds are better serve in improving infrastructure

Just another legacy project.

The Studio Theatre is planned to have 225 seats not 200. While some of the City's other priorities are more important they are also being addressed. The Appleby Ice Centre expansion is being delayed by a year. At least we have venues for skaters. We haven't got anything for performers.

The current build design is not cost effective or makes proper use of space

Cost is a minor issue - we have other projects that are cost comparative and proven to be a community asset. I think the Performing Arts Centre will be the same. Yes, the community needs infrastructure improvements, but there is balance required, and the Arts Centre is a positive balance.

This survey would require a thorough reading and understanding of the data you provided. I will attempt to do this at a later date.

I question the wisdom of this project when other theatres, such as Theatre Aquarius, have always struggled. When there are so many theatres within such a short driving distance, is it really necessary? Meanwhile, we are short of sports facilities for our children.

Upgrading Joseph Brant Hospital is of far greater importance given our close proximity to the Theatre Aquarius and Hamilton Place theatres.

Corporate sponsors committed funds to this project up to 2 years ago. Towns/cities much smaller than Burlington have Performing Arts Centres. Look at Oakville and St. Jacobs just to name 2. As a successful, well-rounded community, we must nurture the creative minds and spirits of our children and citizens as well as the sports minds of this community. The decision for this performing arts centre was made a long time ago and was committed to base on research and groundwork already done. The community will support this through corporate sponsors and supportive citizens. It would be a severe injustice to stop this due to the narrow minds and bullying attitudes of a few. If you need help getting corporate sponsors, contact me and I will help you.

World-class city? Who are you kidding? We are a suburb of Toronto.

Too many cities are quick to build arenas and sports facilities but balk at providing cultural infrastructure. Burlington has the potential to be more.

Any project that the City undertakes will involve costs, but it is necessary to look beyond the cost and see what this will do in terms of economic and cultural growth for the City. It is a wonderful project and one that I would vote in favour of 100%.

It should be self-sustainable just like any other business venture. Otherwise, city funds should be utilized elsewhere such as roads etc., which are a disgrace for a city, this size.

I am insulted that LEED certification is considered as part of beautification costs. Burlington can't even measure its CO2 use yet committed to the environment in SOER III and other documents. It appears to be OK as long as Burlington 'looks pretty and green'. Aim for a GREEN 'world class city'.

The benefits table in your summary appears flawed and unrealistic. I strongly feel that visitors to an event in the PAC will not contribute much if any to the local economy unlike say the Music festival or the Rib Festival or the BIG. Performing Arts is simply too exclusionary in practice. It is an enclosed thing--once the event is over patrons would simply want to go away. Secondly, the waterfront is already a big expenditure we are saddled with. 18 million is too much to spend---please express it as so many dollars per year for the average household and then notice the reaction. We don't need more construction and overcrowding in the downtown.

Can we not downsize to an Oakville level?

It is a pity that the proposed site of the PAC is not a lakeside setting. I would have liked to see a unique PAC building perhaps cantilevered out over the lake to create a truly unique building which in itself would be a tourist attraction, rather than a rather bland "box" as planned for the Locust Street site.

I am confident that the PAC is the proper size for the function it is to serve, unlike the Oakville Centre which is too small and limited for certain venues and Hamilton Place (a concert hall) which is too big and limited to certain venues. Lastly, we have been dragging our feet on this project for a long time and the cost of procrastinating continues to drive the cost of the PAC up.

I can only assume that the City has researched the demand for such a centre and weighed it against the demand for a 5-10000 seat multipurpose arena. It seems to me that there's nothing available of that size between Niagara Falls and Mississauga while Theatres are available all around us (as evidenced in your attached chart). Something that might be of broader appeal to the electorate would be the installation of some artificial turf playing surfaces for football, soccer, field hockey and lacrosse at a fraction of the cost of a PAC. With 25% of today's children being obese surely we should be promoting more physical activity for them. Artificial turf playing surfaces would extend the playing seasons for all of those sports and allow more kids to remain more active, longer. It will also significantly reduce the costs of maintaining the real grass surfaces currently in use by those sports. I trust that this comment will be passed passed on to those that care. I'm sure I'm not unique in this position. I mean, at first blush, it would appear that you're taking the credit that the Feds gave parents for getting their children involved in physical activities and through increased taxation, you're diverting that money into a PAC for what appears to be a very narrow demographic.

The financial benefits are yet really unknown as to how many extra tourist dollars this will generate for Burlington business. The Sound of Music Festival has put us on the map in the GTA and this PAC will only add to our top tier image in Ontario and beyond!

Add an addition on to the existing building, while you're at it sell the orange piece of Iron eyesore. You could incorporate the PAC into the DeGoote school of business. The city has the best of vehicles, the best of machinery, the best of tools. 5 people working for every three needed. The taxpayer doesn't need any more increases. The parking meter rip off hurts downtown business, scaling down of the waterfront after all the new infrastructure is a shame if not a total waste of money. The waterfront condo development is scrapped, all attracting more visitors and more property taxes. You've spent a fortune back tracking and now you want to spend more to replace a perfectly good accessible arts centre that has room for development. You've said it yourself, Hamilton has one, Oakville has one and we have half of one. Do an addition and add another parking lot to it. Stop wasting taxpayer's money. Next you'll redo lakeshore to widen it up to accommodate the new PAC

This is a fantastic idea for Burlington, but a little too costly

Should be self-supporting > user fees (charge those extra for use) Type of acts/performances that it will attract??? As usual, estimates are generally wrong, and we as the taxpayer pay the price (costs escalate over time)

1- Tax impact on industrial property must not place the City in a less financially desirable position than other So. Ont. locations for companies considering Burlington sites.

2- The financial benefits of the PAC are assumptions - without information on the financial benefits to other municipalities with existing PACs, it is difficult to agree or disagree on the "benefits" to Burlington. There is little question the performing arts groups would benefit, as would those who support such groups' efforts.

3- If a lower-cost to the taxpayers of Burlington can be obtained, it would obviously benefit them. It is hoped the planning committee of the PAC has taken this into consideration ... There are always other priorities, but many of them are less glamorous in that they may be underground or simply taken for granted - like sewers, water service and roads.

Once people realize the potential increase in revenue from all potential sources in the city (restaurants, parking, accommodation, retail etc) then the money being spent to build the centre and the increase in tax shouldn't seem like a such a large sacrifice. This centre will bring much more business to Burlington and create some new job opportunities.

This is a joke. There are people in our city that have to depend on food banks and someone or a group of people think it is important that we spend \$36 Million on an Arts facility that Oakville has already. Last time I checked Burlington and Oakville were both part of Halton Region so there is your Arts Centre. Let's face it \$500K per year to maintain it. That's a joke as well. What about scheduled major maintenance every 2-3 years. Burlington is not Toronto and never will be. Use the money to lower taxes instead of raising them. Use the money to lower our utility costs. What a novel concept. If the Chamber Members are in support of this then rest assured I will not be renewing my membership next year and I challenge every board member to come up with a really good idea why we should waste this money.

PAC is a must for Cultural growth and Living quality in the city. It's time for another move forward!

I believe that we need to take a close look at the Oakville PAC and the statistics they have with regard to the usage and benefit it represents to it's local residents and businesses. I would be interested to know how may Oakville residents actually make use of their PAC. I do not see any statistics that suggest this is a project that would benefit the majority of Burlington Residents and businesses. I feel that this is a project developed to meet the needs and desires of a minority group and not those of a majority and therefore should be funded only by the minority group it will benefit and not all of Burlington as a whole. Besides, I find it hard to believe that the proposed tax increase for this project cannot be put to better use improving upon existing facilities or services in Burlington.

\$36 million seems like an expensive building. Do we want Burlington to be a "world-class" city, versus a well-run urban centre that is safe and fun for families, and that attracts good employers?

Where are the priorities? The City has shown mismanagement of public funds when it comes to the Pier, the Waterfront Development in general and other items, which have grown in costs. So are we going to give them another blank cheque to do it again? Stop the madness! This is not a game! This is real money. \$40million is too much and totally out of line. No business would pay such monies for a building. The City is wasteful, inefficient, unable to manage public funds and there needs to be systems in place to monitor and prevent powerful corporations from pushing City Council to pay such a large amount of money. Healthcare, the environment, promoting clean businesses and innovative economic development should beat out money sucking loss leaders like an art centre which is being promoted by powerful construction lobby groups. What does the City councilors and Mayor get out of this deal is my question. Yes there are benefits and I appreciate that. But once a year I can drive 10 minutes to a neighbouring community to use theirs since theirs is underutilized as it is. In today's world and economic uncertainties, this is NOT A PRIORITY. Contact your City reps and let them know your thoughts and how you want them to vote!

I would support a smaller venue w 500 seats similar to Oakville facility, but only if sufficient savings to do so - if cost comparison does not allow for savings, then the return on a 700 seat venue would maximize revenue potential and therefore quickly recover the added costs.

Honestly, I'm torn. The PAC is an important step toward making Burlington even BETTER than it is - coupled with the Waterfront, which is amazing, and the downtown, parks, etc., etc., etc. it really is one of the best cities I've ever lived in. However, and my problem with most initiatives like this one - how is a PAC going to decrease the poverty levels in Burlington? How will it help feed those who depend on the food bank? How will it help to provide affordable housing? How will it help the environment? Sadly, I don't have an answer - but if I had a magic wand I guess I'd try tackling those issues and spending time trying to come up with solutions for THOSE problems, rather than worrying about an insignificant tax increase ... and spending time, money and energy on solving REAL problems. Thank you Chamber for presenting our ideas. You're a wonderful group that continually contributes to the betterment of Burlington. I'm proud to be a Member

It has taken 30 years to get to this point. It's time to take the bull by the horns!!

The PAC is important to help Burlington attract world-class corporate citizens because they in turn must attract talented and committed employees. Such people choose to locate in cities with facilities like the PAC.

Until the city can control the cost of PAC I am not in favour we should be spending more on infrastructure rather than expecting tourism revenue to pay for it you cant have both for the money they want to spend

At a lower cost to me as a resident of Burlington. Funding should come from other sources.

We don't need and can't afford a PAC!!

While a portion of funding from the City of Burlington is reported to come from dividends from Burlington Hydro, those dividends are already a part of the ongoing funding of the City's operations and have been for some time.... it is misleading (and in my opinion dishonest) to imply that the dividends are currently surplus to the City's requirements. I believe a higher priority for our capital spending dollars would be to acquire from the Public School Board the park land (and if necessary the buildings and parking lots) that make up the Gary Allen School property south of New Street (formerly known as General Brock School).

I find it difficult to agree or disagree at all because I have seen very little about sustainability. Will they be doing annual fundraising? Where will those dollars come from? Will it negatively affect other cultural organizations such as the museums and Art Centre? Those are the questions I would like to see asked and answered.

As a parent of 4 children, all of whom perform in dance & music, it troubles me that we have to travel to Hamilton for their end of year shows & recitals, with just the dance companies alone in Burlington, I can imagine the PAC being booked for several months per year. It makes sense for Burlington to invest in its infrastructure this way as our city becomes more internationally recognized. Next we need a University!

The cost of the PAC will continue to rise as the years go on if it isn't built now. This is the missing facility to make Burlington a tourist destination. This facility has cost recovery attached to it in addition to attracting employment, employers, other revenue and recognition for the value of performance to the quality of life in Burlington. It's as important as other activities in life such as sports/recreation libraries museums and parks.

What do you truly believe the cost of the building will end up at do we really need another cause for annual galas and fundraisers when we have every imaginable charity fighting for funds as it is; and this is no charity; why do we look at operating costs of skating and swimming arenas rather than cost of other theatres; finally Theatre Aquarius want survive without the Dofasco's of the world; don't we have better causes where this kind of money can go?

Good idea and worthwhile for the city, with great involvement and contribution from citizens, however it is just WAY too much money. The project should be downsized to fit within the original budget.

All "arts, including performing arts" should be funded 100% by private individuals or self-sustaining economics. If "art" was that important enough people would pay to see it, making it worthwhile in a self-evident manner. It's too much money indulging too few individuals. Fix the roads, get more ploughs, eliminate parking fees downtown, heaven forbid... lower or freeze taxes.

Art is part of the soul of the city

This should assist the city in attracting the Creative Class, which is where most new jobs are coming from.

Having a Performing Arts Centre in our city, near the waterfront, I believe will be an incredible asset, not only to our citizens, but also to tourism.

Personally I've made a 20k donation to PAC and want it to get going or I'll start to get the feeling my money is wasted on studies and bull crap.

Being from Oakville, I cannot really answer question 5 but having a PAC is extremely important to the economy of Burlington; from a tourism point of view; from an economic (brings in new spending from surrounding areas) point of view. It will become part of the 'new culture' of Burlington.

There are many entertainment venues in close proximity (Copps is 15 minutes drive as is Oakville PAC) to Burlington (not to mention Toronto) to offer residents choices. If the private entertainment industry does not wish to construct one the city should not. It's not isolated like Sudbury or Timmins; residents have many choices within 15 minutes

- 1) I do not believe the economic impact as described - I would like to see the assumptions.
- 2) The tax impact is greater than indicated - it is misleading.
- 3) All information provided is suspect as the costs have consistently been significantly underestimated and any increase is fully on the backs of the citizens. The PAC committee has not been able to keep the proposal reasonable.
- 4) There are many more worthy projects that benefit the majority of the citizens of Burlington - not a small %.

My sole disappointment is that, at this cost level, the local performing arts community will not be able to afford the rent, and the main stage will wind up being a professional theatre and concert hall.

Great survey. Thanks for the basic info

A waste of money!!! I can go to many other theaters to see bad drama

How accurate are the costs and benefits?

As former Alderman and fundraising chairman for the Burlington Arts centre in the 1970's, it was always anticipated that there would be a performing arts centre in the near future but we never thought that it would take this long. In the 1980's, I was chair of the steering committee looking into that possibility but it was felt that the economy was not ready for such a centre. However, with the passage of time, the population growth, the demand for such a facility, the successful fundraising efforts over the past few years, the studies by experts and city staff clearly indicate that the time is now. I agree with Councilor Jack Dennison that we must make sure that both the federal and provincial govts. Contribute \$4m. Each just as we had financial assistance from the Provincial govt. in the 70's for the Art Centre. However, we must continue private fundraising efforts as we did when the Arts Centre was under construction.

It is time that we (everyone) appreciated the truth about the contribution creativity and the arts make to humankind. In fact, I advocate we scrap our Afghanistan mission and pour the money saved into arts-related projects. It is unfortunate many people listen to our politicians who claim to be wisely managing "our" money. Give it back now. Our time has come - our = the citizens and people of Canada.

Very important to the cultural growth and commercial development of Burlington

City will always have other higher priority spending. We need a PAC but it can't be at the expense of other priority spending. I am concerned that cost will continue to grow at detailed design and tendering.

The proposed development is too expensive. We could build a PAC but scale it back just like the city did with the Pier @ downtown

My main concern is that these project start off costing "36 million" but have a bad tradition of ending up way over and in some case extremely over budget. If Burlington can do this and strongly police the finances then I say yes otherwise lets do something about the King road overpass and correctly locating a McMaster campus

I strongly support PAC. It is the type of facility that helps build a community and will add much needed culture to the City. We need to do it right the first time and not "skimp" on costs because that will reduce the quality of the facility in the long term.

750 seats plus a studio theatre is too large for the city. The size of Oakville's PAC is plenty large enough at approx 500 seats. This should be sufficient. This would reduce cost.

Expand on existing student theatre?

This is the type of facility for the elite. The average citizen will not make use of it. I don't want Burlington to be world class. If I want that then I will go to Toronto.

Burlington is reasonably served by centres in Hamilton and Oakville and those facilities are well supported by our citizens. To build one here could cause distress to those neighbouring facilities.

Please have a taxpayer referendum.

Lets wait and see what the tenders come in at. Is this a guaranteed price of the Consultants? We have to include inflation, escalation, material cost increase etc.

PAC to make Burlington a "world class city".... London, Paris, New York, Tokyo and BURLINGTON; give me a break!

As a performer I would be very proud to have a facility to perform in. As a businessperson I am excited about the strength it will bring to Burlington as a destination for tourism, attraction for employers and employees and the balance it would create with the other forms of recreation and entertainment we have in Burlington. The cost is never going to go down - so get on with it NOW!

I feel this is something that should go to a referendum. My taxes are going up again this year, with PAC it would go up again. The PAC would be nice, but not a need. We do have one of the lower tax rates in the GTA, but we don't need to find things to make them more equal. Let manage what we have VERY well and aim towards PAC but lets save or raise more before we do.

Very important and strategic investment in the development of our city

I cannot see the justification of a PAC as to its operating costs. I do not think we will fully utilize the PAC as a result we will have p/u the operating costs. Pac can only be used at night when there is parking available. (No afternoon performance)

Sooner or later it will be essential to have facilities like the PAC in our City. With the limited information available to me, it seems that the subject has been researched significantly, and I assume that the costs are in line with reality.

Is the Hamilton and Oakville performing Art Centres always full to capacity? The costs should be raised by fundraising instead

It's time we added another hospital to our city first.

This is not new it has been discussed for many years and always shoved on the back burner. The costs rise as time goes - so act now.

Not just the capital cost but there needs to be thorough scrutiny on the operating costs. It should be and be seen as self sustaining.