

April 12, 2018

London City Council
P.O Box 5035
London ON N6A 4L9

Dear Council Members,

As Chair of the Board of Western Fair Association (WFA), I write to share the Board's perspective on why any expanded gaming initiative in London is best situated at the Western Fair District (WFD). As you may well know, the true "owners" of WFA is its membership which includes a wide spectrum of agricultural and community organizations.

The WFA and the City of London have enjoyed a very unique, but synergistic partnership for over 150 years.

The WFD lands it occupies is jointly owned by both the City and WFA. The WFA remains a responsible and accountable steward of the lands and buildings for the joint benefit of the City and WFA and ultimately, for the benefit of the community and region it serves. WFA as a Not-for-Profit Agricultural Society has a mandate to educate and entertain with all and any surpluses from its operations being reinvested back into the jointly owned property and the programming activities that are embodied in its mandate.

The attachment is a concise summary of how an expanded gaming designation to the lands occupied by WFA will maximize the mutual benefits to both the City, WFA and ultimately the community.

Sincerely,

Joe Dales, Chair
Western Fair Association Board of Governors

cc: Anna Lisa Barbon, Managing Director, Corporate Services & City Treasurer, CFO

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Why Expanded Gaming in London Should Be Designated at the Western Fair District?

If there is support for expanded gaming in the City of London (City) the maximum benefit to the Community and the City will come from designating Western Fair District (WFD) as the site.

- The City and Western Fair Association (WFA) have enjoyed a 150 year history together on this landmark site. As 50/50 owners the City and WFA have supported and developed it into a vibrant entertainment district. Rebranded as Western Fair District it has a high level of name recognition in southwestern Ontario. Approximately three million guests come to the site each year to find unique entertainment offerings including an annual fair, agricultural events and market, consumer and trade shows, gaming, racing, music and sports.
- A 2016 study by KPMG revealed that the activities of WFD contributed \$196.1 million annually in Gross Domestic Product to the economy of which \$146.1 million is non-gaming related.
- The site's brand recognition over the last twenty years has successfully supported the growth of gross gaming revenue to a level today that exceeds \$100M annually. This has included two previous gaming footprint expansions on the property.
- The Raceway at Western Fair District is the highest wagering Signature racetrack in Canada with Pari-Mutuel betting in calendar 2017 of \$36.7 million over 1,207 races. Gaming on horseracing has continued on the site since commencing in 1879.
- Two events (The Fair and The London Wine and Food Show) were recognized by Festivals and Events Ontario ("FEO") in 2018 as Top 100 events in the Province.
- The Sports Centre which is a venture between the City and WFA is operated for the betterment of the community has also hosted world class sports events such as sledge hockey, figure skating and curling.
- As a not for profit Agricultural Society any annual surpluses generated by WFA are re-invested back into the site's programming and facilities for the joint benefit of the City and WFA. Approximately \$90 million has been invested into capital projects since 2000 helping to ensure continual site development and renewal which also supports the revitalization of Old East Village as a dynamic and growing part of the City.