

Report to Corporate Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Corporate Services Committee
From: Cathy Saunders, City Clerk
Subject: Application – Issuance of Proclamation – Southwestern Ontario Film Week
Date: March 29, 2021

Recommendation

That, the Civic Administration BE ADVISED as to how Municipal Council wishes to proceed with the attached (Appendix “A”) Proclamation request.

Previous Reports Pertinent to this Matter

Corporate Services Committee – December 3, 2019
Corporate Services Committee – January 6, 2020

Background

The Issuance of Proclamations Policy is attached as Schedule “A” for information purposes.

Conclusion

The Civic Administration is seeking direction from the Municipal Council as to how they wish to proceed with the attached (Appendix “A”) proclamation request received March 4, 2021 from the Forest City Film Festival requesting the week of October 17 – 24, 2021 be proclaimed Southwestern Ontario Film Week.


Submitted by: Cathy Saunders, City Clerk

Proclamation Request Form

Requests for the issuance of proclamations are governed by Council Policy (excerpted below). Requests must be received at least six (6) weeks in advance of the requested issuance date and may be emailed to the City Clerk at

ClerksApprovalRequests@london.ca or mailed to City Hall, P.O. Box 5035 LONDON, ON, N6A 4L9.

Request details

Name of Organization Forest City Film Festival	
Date Proclamation Required October 17 -24	
Proclamation Name Southwestern Ontario Film Week	
Proclamation Type (day), (week), (month) Week	
Category (public awareness campaigns), (charitable fundraising campaigns), (arts and cultural celebrations) Arts and Cultural Celebration	
Requester Name Dorothy Downs, Executive Director, FCFF	
Requester Telephone Number	
Requester Email Address	
Requester Address London, Ontario	
Required Supporting Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detail information on the Organization• Detail information on the Event• Confirmation of authorization from the Organization to submit the request	
The undersigned confirms that I am the Official Representative of the Organization requesting the Proclamation and that by signing this Application, I acknowledge and agree that my organization complies with all City of London's Policies and By-laws.  _____ Signature	February 3, 2021 _____ Date
NOTICE OF COLLECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION Personal information collected on this form is collected under the authority of the <i>Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25</i> and may also be used for purposes related to the Issuance of Proclamations Policy and Proclamation Request Form. Questions about this collection should be addressed to the City Clerk, 3rd floor, City Hall, 300 Dufferin Ave., London, ON N6A 4L9. Tel: 519-661-2489, ext. 4937, email: csaunder@london.ca	

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FOREST CITY
FILM FESTIVAL

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R E P O R T

Message from the Executive Director

In years to come as we look back at the history of FFFF, 2020 will be seen as the year we made our mark as an annual festival that will be here, come hell or high water, or COVID-19.

While others scaled back their events or shut down for a year we decided to do the opposite and reach out even more, work to be even bigger than in past years, do things even better than some established festivals and really make our community take note. In screening more than 70 films and events, all online, and getting nearly 2,000 sales which may translate into an audience of more than 4,000, the Forest City Film Festival has proven there is a passion for local film among local film lovers, and we will feed that audience as we support local filmmakers and their craft.

I feel proud of our incredible team of nearly 100 people that made it happen.

I am very happy that we made the decision to move forward despite all of the challenges and hard work that it entailed. Most of all I feel really excited for what the future holds for this festival.

Thank you to our sponsors who supported us when times were tough. Your community-mindedness made it possible. Thank you to filmmakers who sent their films in for digital streaming and attended the industry events. Thank you to our loyal audience who bought tickets even though it's not the way they would prefer to enjoy the festival.

We hope 2020 was a year that everyone "Festivaled their own way!"

*Dorothy Downs
Executive Director
Forest City Film Festival*



OUR STORY

2020:

2020 has been a year like no other, but the Forest City Film Festival adapted and held its fifth annual event. FCFF opened with an inaugural Music Video Night showcasing 15 regional artists and continued with back-to-back screenings featuring 75 films over a course of 8 days on our online platform. The festival started with streaming our music video selections and the event included a special performance by Marty Kolls. Throughout the festival week we also had two fantastic Indigenous programs with great Q&A hosted by Judith Schuyler. At the end of the week we had the fun and unique animation Cloudy with A Chance of Meatballs for our Flashback Friday screening and the comedy Bendita Rebelia for our International Screening.

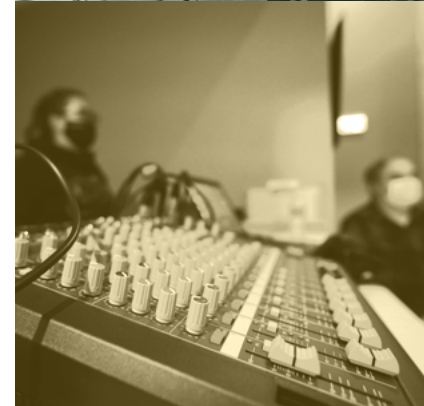
Over the course of the weekend, we had 69 films in competition with 15 narrative and documentary shorts, nine narrative and documentary features, six animations, and 15 music videos. We screened eleven films out of competition. Most of the films we curated this year had someone from the creative team join an interactive Q&A after the screening. Audiences were engaged by asking questions at the Q&A sessions and voting for the Old Oak Audience Choice Award, which was announced on November 1. Additionally, the filmmakers had an opportunity to learn and network over the course of five days in 12 Industry Session workshops and panels. This year there was an addition of the Up Close Conversation series where we had excellent discussions with Andy Robertshaw, Kris Pearn and Victor Garber. It was a full, exciting and engaging week of local film!

Mission: London Ontario's Forest City Film Festival celebrates the art of cinema through a regional lens with a focus on national and global films and filmmakers connected to Southwestern Ontario. We honour successes, showcase new, compelling artists and inspire future ones.

Vision: To build a successful, ongoing film festival that will strengthen filmmakers and the growing industry here by connecting them with audiences. Our festival will enable local audiences and artists to access regional and Canadian film.



The Forest City Film Festival (FCFF) is a charitable organization dedicated to celebrating and advancing the art of film in Southwestern Ontario. FCFF has been granted charitable status by Revenue Canada (#786771891RR001).





Message from the Board Chair

As the world shut down due to COVID-19 and a decision had to be made about the Forest City Film Festival season, it would be easy to slip into a cliché about how a decision was made that the show must go on, to quote that old showbiz saying that is testament to the indomitable spirit and creativity of those who dare to dream.

Well, the show did go on and the Forest City Film Festival 2020 is proof that such dreams really can come true.

Executive Director Dorothy Downs made it clear from the start there would be a full festival this year showcasing movies even as others scaled back or shut down, that it will be online and will include a robust round of Industry Sessions including a ground-breaking series of Indigenous films and a panel discussion by First Nation filmmakers.

Not to stop there, the Youth Film Festival was expanded, as if a little thing like closing down schools could stop us.

Looking back at it now, it was a remarkable achievement. More than 70 films and events, up to 4,000 viewers, and visits from Hollywood icon Victor Garber, director Kris Pearn and a military consultant to Steven Spielberg all made this an event not to be missed.

To all the filmmakers and sponsors, the audience, a small army of volunteers, and Festival staff, thank you. You should all be proud for helping make it happen, for making sure the show did go on and for dreaming very big indeed.

*Norman De Bono - Board Chair
Forest City Film Festival*

Our Team:

Our eight board members, 5 staff and 109 volunteers worked behind the scenes to support FCFF this year!

Founder and Executive Director:

Dorothy Downs

John Brennan

Kelly Peckham

Board Members:

Norman DeBono - Board Chair

Nancy Branscombe

Romy Goulem

Megan Fowler

Rene Zwinkels

Mark Vogelsang

Monica Ulici

Staff:

Nandita Dutta - Marketing and Intern Manager

Festival Committee - 11 members

Derrick Beckford - Production Manager

Production team - 10 members

Julia Conrad - Admin Assistant

Narrative Selection Committee - 17 members

Lydia McClory - Youth Coordinator

Documentary Selection Committee - 17 members

Will Sharpe - Marketing & Development Assistant

Youth Film Selection Committee - 13 members

Assisted by:

Marketing Committee - 11 members

Industry Sessions - 10 members

Marketing Interns - 8 members Youth Film

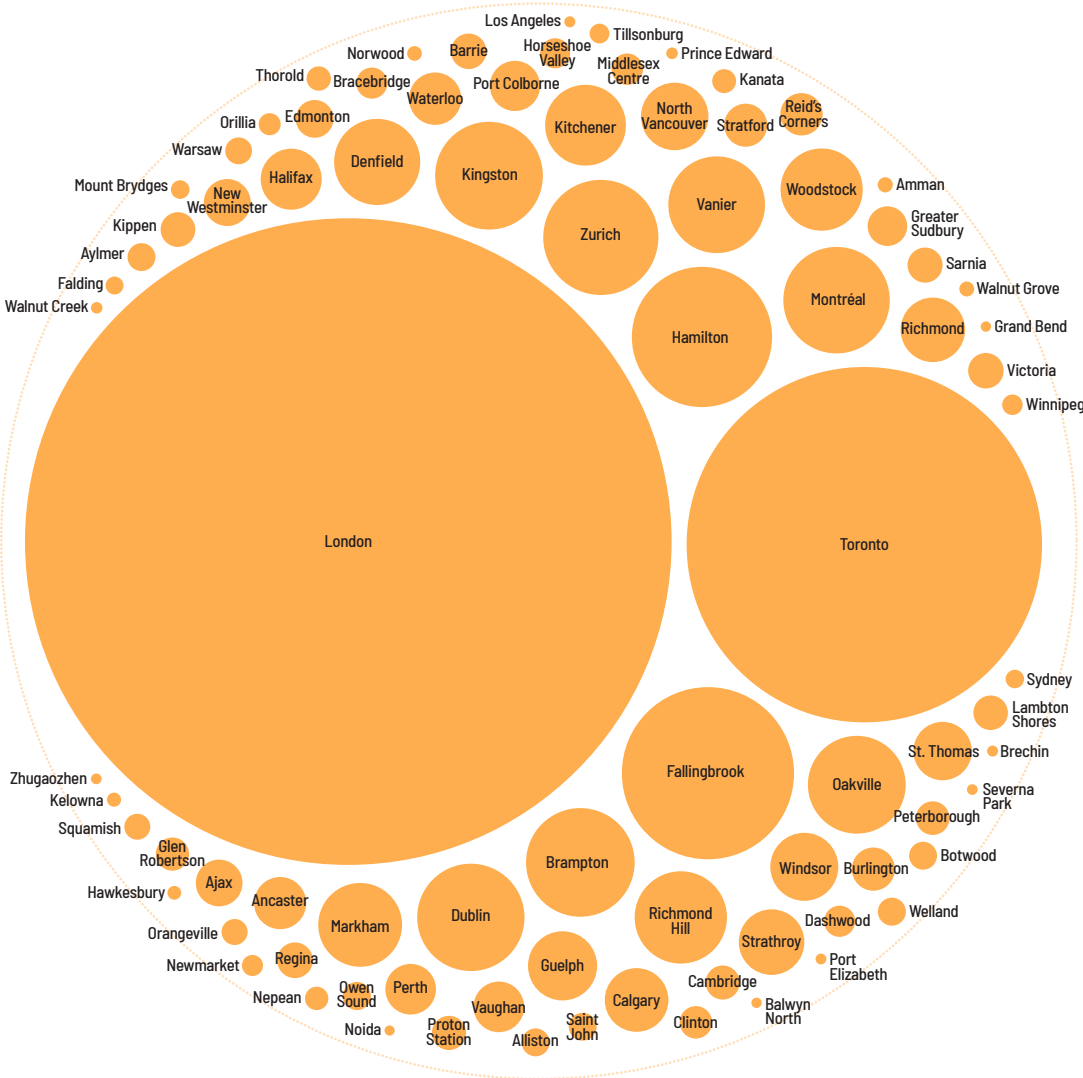
Music Video Committee - 6 members

International Screening Committee - 6 members



Our Year Five Audience:

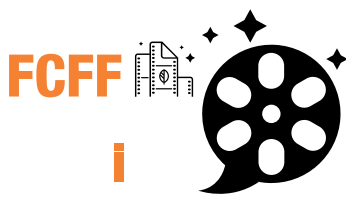
Our biggest festival yet; eight days with 75 films! Despite having to adapt to an online platform this year, we were thrilled to be able to connect movie lovers to a variety of regional films. From our first ever Music Video night on Saturday to the awards celebration and an additional week of films being On Demand, we had over 9,831 streams. Over the festival week, we had over 1,900 tickets sold and 120 festival passes sold allowing our audience to festival their own way!



Streamed world wide in:

- Canada**
- India**
- Australia**
- South Africa**
- China**
- Jordan**
- USA**





The FCFF Industry Sessions nurture the film industry in Southwestern Ontario by offering support to both emerging and established filmmakers, helping talent from this region grow and find success. These workshops offer direct, hands-on help with everything from how to better technical production of a film, such as sound, to raising money for that project and even how to pitch a movie idea.

Our Goals are to:

1. Make London a preferred destination for emerging filmmakers by creating an environment that is friendlier, more supportive and more economical than other options.
2. Build strong, collaborative relationships with these filmmakers so they return to the area for their future productions and are eager to participate in festival specific events here.
3. Focus on professional developers for these emerging filmmakers as another way to both push the quality of films being produced here and also to establish ourselves as a community "hub" valued by filmmakers interested in elevating their work and finding success as working professionals.

In 2020 we:

- Three Up Close Conversations, four panels, two seminars and a networking opportunity
- Engaged with 24 industry experts representing organizations such as Ontario Creates, William F. White International, Canadian Media Fund, LEDC and IO Industries. In total 15% of our experts were local, 85% came from Toronto, Vancouver and New York and 42% of experts were female
- Finally, 307 people participated in our Industry Sessions, and \$11,000 pitchfest

Economic Impact: Ontario Climate:

A total of 343 film and television projects were produced in Ontario in 2019. Between them, these 343 Ontario-produced projects contributed \$2.1 billion to the economy, resulting in approximately \$6.3 million production dollars left in Ontario per production. Forest City Film Festival is helping to get London on the map within the film world so that we can start to participate in this vibrant industry that is responsible for 37,000 full-time direct and spin-off jobs across Ontario.

Impact on London:

Over the 20 years of the Community Arts Investment Program the London Arts Council and City of London invested in seven film festival events and programs, but in recent years there has been significant growth in film submissions and support. In 2015 LAC funded three applications in film, and the Forest City Film Festival debuted in 2016. In 2019, three short years later, LAC funded 13 film projects. The cumulative investment in film from LAC over the last four years is \$216,360. The FCFF, through its funding panel, has informed the London film community of investment availability through LAC.



FOREST CITY YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

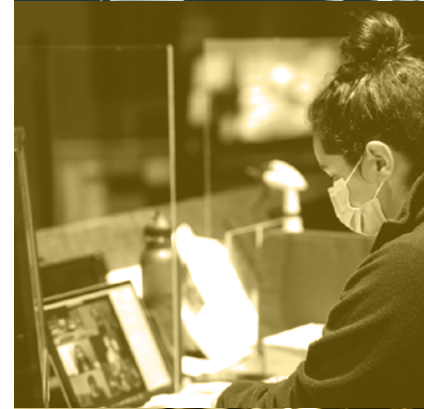
The Youth Film Festival celebrates, inspires and showcases the exceptional talent of students across Southwestern Ontario as they gain industry knowledge and it empowers them to share their vision through film and contemporary media. We give opportunities to high school students to celebrate their creativity and for their work to be seen on the big screen.



Of note, 59.4% of the average high school student body is involved in courses that support skills and interests necessary for the film and digital media industry. Out of 31,352 students in secondary schools in London this means that 18,623 possible students would be directly impacted by this opportunity. Though this competition is open to all 19 boards in Southwestern Ontario, in 2020 its reach was focused on London and region. In 2020 we plan to expand our reach to numerous SWO school boards with the goal of sharing this opportunity with more students across the region.

In 2020 we:

- Offered 8 educational seminars, 2 live in London and St. Thomas and 6 online after COVID hit
- Submissions from 9 schools at 3 school boards
- 24 finalists screened to an audience of 588 people and judged by five industry experts
- 1698 people viewed the seminars on YouTube and Facebook
- 6 school boards signed up for 2020/2021 memberships
- \$4,000 in prize money awarded





The Media/Press:

June 11th | LFP |

Estate donation brings new downtown park, mural project in St. Thomas

June 17th | LFP |

Fest club offers online look at film about Johnny Cash's longtime London Manager

July 2nd | LFP |

Forest City Film Festival shifts to online screenings for October event

Sept 1st | firstshowing.net |

New US Trailer for 'When the Storm Fades' Philippines Docu-Dramedy

Sept 2nd | London Inc |

The Show Goes On

Sept 17th | LFP |

Oxford drive-in offers evening of entertainment from London Lesbian FF

Sept 18th | LFP |

Showtime! Forest City Film Festival eyes biggest-ever audience with virtual screenings

Sept 21st | Fresh FM |

Liz Reviews: Forest City Film Festival's 'From the Vine'

Sept 23rd | Playback Mag |

Stakeholders launch the Southwestern Ontario Film Alliance

Sept 29th | LFP |

Undaunted by COVID-19, Forest City Film Fest ready to roll with bigger, better virtual event

Sept 29th | Fresh FM |

Liz Reviews: Forest City Film Festival's 'The Cuban'

Oct 1st | The Beacon Herald |

New film and television industry group pushing for incentivized production in Southwestern Ontario

Oct 6th | Fresh FM |

Liz Reviews: Forest City Film Fest's 'The Walrus and the Whistleblower'

Oct 9th | LFP |

Forest City Film Festival ready for launch with 76 films, lots of virtual talk sessions

Oct 12th | LFP |

Forest City Film Festival forging ahead with virtual screenings

Oct 13th Fresh FM |

Everything You Need To Know About Forest City Film Fest

Oct 15th | Global News |

75 films slated to stream as 2020 Forest City Film Festival goes online-only

Oct 17th | LFP |

FILM FESTIVAL: Historian separates fact from fiction of war movies

Oct 17th | CBC |

Press play as Forest City Film Festival gets underway

Oct 18th | LFP |

Any job will do to feed first-time filmmaker's movie passion

Oct 18th | LFP |

FILM FESTIVAL: Any job will do to feed first-time filmmaker's movie passion

Oct 20th | CTV News |

National premiere of film that shines 'light' on Montreal happening in London, Ont.

Oct 20th | Sarnia Observer |

Sarnia film festival offering retrospective of hometown director

Oct 20th | Western News |

'Little Red' a granddaughter's film tribute

Oct 21st | LFP |

London native anxious to return to Broadway after Forest City Film Festival

Oct 21st | Western Gazette |

Student film premiers at Forest City Film Festival

Oct 23rd | LFP |

Victor Garber comes back home for virtual Forest City Film Festival visit

Oct 26th | LFP |

The Cuban takes feature film prize at Forest City Film Festival

Nov 2nd | Global News |

International award won by Fanshawe College fashion film

Nov 6th | Whig Standard Herald |

My Heart Pounded on the Street at Montreal's Cite Memoire Tableaux

Radio:

Aug 25 | CBC Radio |

Bringing the film industry to London

Oct 12th | FM96 |

Forest City Film Festival 2020 listing

Oct 13th | Fresh FM |

All Things 'Forest City Film Festival'

Oct 13th | Fresh FM |

Watch FCFF Movies At Home!

Oct 14th | Radio 980 |

Mike Stubbs show - David O'Keefe talking about Andy Robertshaw

Oct 15th | CBC Radio |

The Forest City Film Festival highlights Indigenous movies

Television:

Oct 14th | Rogers TV |

Dorothy on What's Up London

Online:



3,003 fans

326,755 reach

22.1K minutes of video watched



699 followers

157,510 impressions



1,305 followers

43,707 reach



93.5K views

242,119 impressions

54K unique viewers



Google Ads

3,370 impressions

387 clicks

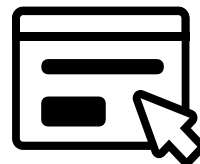
11.48% click through rate



MAILING LIST

1,859 subscribers

39% average open rate



WEBSITE

2596 click throughs to fcff.ca



Film Facts:

75 outstanding films

6 animations

33 short films

15 music videos

23 feature length films

2 French films

22 documentaries

4 films with Indigenous content

Plus another 20 films and 4 pitches in the Youth Film Festival Screening.



2020 Winners:

Best Short Film:

Breaking Up For the Modern Girl- *Sydney Nicole Herauf*

Best Narrative Feature:

The Cuban - *Sergio Navarretta*

Best Documentary Short:

Hollie's Dress - *Annie Sakkab*

Best Documentary Feature:

The Walrus and the Whistleblower - *Nathalie Bibeau*

Best Short Animation:

Scribblings - *Tori Richards*

Winning Screenplay:

Sluts - *Mary Cross*

Old Oak Audience

Choice Award:

Into the Light by *Janice Zolf*

Pitchfest Winner:

My Regularly Scheduled Chemo Appointment - *Tyson Breuer*

Audience Comments:

"I enjoyed all of it. I liked how the shorts were put with the features. The packages were well put together."

- Audience member

"That's where I discovered who I was and what I wanted to do with my life. The only thing available to me when I was young was The Grand, but the arts have just blossomed in London in every way. It's really remarkable. I'm so impressed London has the Forest City Film Festival."

- Victor Garber
(up close conversation 2020)

"Great films we would not see otherwise. We especially liked the presence of someone from each film."

From the Filmmakers:

"FCFF truly cares about the future of their filmmakers and connecting them with seasoned professionals and various networking opportunities. I'm grateful I had the opportunity to participate with my short."

"I am awed by the incredible array of films in this festival and how the film community was brought together. Kudos to Dorothy, the team and the volunteers for pulling this off, it is a huge feat and must have been a staggering amount of work."

"Forest City Film Festival handled the switch to virtual quite well. The organizers truly care about the future of their filmmakers and connecting them with seasoned professionals and various networking opportunities. I'm grateful I had the opportunity to participate with my short, 'Pressure Play'."

"One of the most professional film festivals I've been a part of. FCFF's adaptation to the new COVID festival landscape was excellent."

"As a filmmaker, I felt involved and loved. By showcasing my new film FROM THE VINE, as well as participating on a panel discussion, the FCFF team showed how much they care for filmmakers."

"Most people would say a virtual festival is not possible but against all odds FCFF did it; incredible! A Youth Festival, Industry sessions, multiple film genres... FCFF is doing far more than most festivals do in Canada"

From the Youth Festival:

"The Festival has provided my son with incredible opportunities for development as a filmmaker. I don't know that he would have even considered a career in film if the Festival did not exist. Being part of a community with a vibrant film festival showed him that possibilities for careers in the arts exist - even right here in London, Ontario."

For my son, the realization that all of his areas of artistic interest - visual art, creative writing, music - could be combined in filmmaking was life-changing. His success this year in the FC Youth Film Festival has validated his choice to pursue a degree in filmmaking and a career in the film industry."

- Filmmaker Parent

"I was given a chance to get my ideas out there which I have never had the opportunity to do. I also got to meet a lot of people through it."

- Student Filmmaker

"I can't thank all of you enough, nor express how much this experience has changed my life, but I want you to know that the Youth Film Festival is truly a gift to all aspiring young filmmakers, and I am so grateful that you have taken the time to make it what it is today."

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KEY PARTNERS



INDUSTRY PARTNERS



PRODUCER PARTNERS



FRIENDS OF THE FESTIVAL



MEDIA PARTNERS



COMMUNITY PARTNERS





Issuance of Proclamations Policy

Policy Name: Issuance of Proclamations Policy

Legislative History: Adopted September 19, 2017 (By-law No. CPOL.-115-367); Amended July 24, 2018 (By-law No. CPOL.-115(a)-418)

Last Review Date: January 6, 2020

Service Area Lead: City Clerk

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy sets out the requirements for the issuance of proclamations.

2. Definitions

2.1 Not applicable.

3. Applicability

3.1 This policy shall apply to any request for the issuance of proclamations on behalf of the City of London.

4. The Policy

4.1. Proclamations are ceremonial documents issued and signed by the Mayor on behalf of City of London Council that officially recognizes public awareness campaigns; charitable fundraising campaigns; and arts and cultural celebrations of organizations that reside/operate within the City of London. The requester must clearly identify the significance and connection of the proclamation to the mandate and goals as set out in the City of London's Strategic Plan. A proclamation does not constitute a personal or civic endorsement.

Application Process

- a) Proclamations requests are to be submitted on the City of London Application form to the City Clerk's Office at least six (6) weeks in advance of the requested issuance date.
- b) The Application must provide sufficient background information about the organization, cause or event being proclaimed and the proposed text for inclusion in the proclamation. The proposed text is subject to approval by the City of London to ensure compliance with City of London's policies and by-laws.
- c) Upon receipt of the Application, the City Clerk's Office will review the Application in accordance with this Policy and if the Application appears to be in compliance with the Policy, the Application will be placed on the next available Corporate Services Committee meeting for consideration.
- d) The Corporate Services Committee will review the Application and provide a recommendation to the Municipal Council for consideration with respect to the disposition of the Applications.

SCHEDULE "A"

Administration of Policy:

- e) The cause or event must contribute to the economic, social and cultural fabric of the City of London.
- f) Repeat requests must be submitted on an annual basis.
- g) An organization may request one proclamation per calendar year.
- h) Organization do not have exclusive rights to the day, week, or month being proclaimed.
- i) Proclamations of a similar topic will be issued on a first come first served basis.
- j) The City of London will not incur any expenses relating to the advertising or promotion of a proclamation. Recipients are responsible for the promotion of the proclamation, organization of related activities and for all associated costs.
- k) Proclamations will not be issued for:
 - Matters of political controversy, ideological or religious beliefs or individual conviction.
 - Events or organizations with no direct connection to the City of London.
 - Campaigns or events contrary to City of London policies or by-laws.
 - National, Independence or Republic Days.
 - Campaign or events intended for profit-making purposes.
 - Recognition of individuals.
 - Recognition of events or organizations that espouse discrimination, hatred, violence or racism.
 - Matters attempting to influence government policy.
 - Matters designed to incite hatred or disorder.
- l) The City of London reserves the right to refuse to issue a proclamation.