

NEWS RELEASE

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Western Fair unveils new name and new future

London, Ontario ... The Western Fair District was unveiled at a special celebration this evening for members and community stakeholders of the Western Fair Association (WFA). The rebranding was introduced within the context of the new strategic directions that will be implemented over the coming months and years.

“This new direction for the Western Fair is grounded in its venerable past while responding to the need to change, improve and grow,” said Al Marr, Chair of the Board of Governors, Western Fair District. “The Western Fair began in the 19th Century as an agricultural association and will meet the challenges of the 21st with energy, commitment and dedicated service.”

Over the past 144 years the Western Fair Association has evolved from its original incarnation as the host of an agricultural exhibition into an entertainment complex that offers the traditional “fall fair”, trade and consumer shows, a sports centre, a racetrack and gaming (slots). The future vision of the association incorporates all of these activities within one district that will complement the revitalization of London by serving as an east-end entertainment anchor to London’s core.

“The Western Fair District will entertain, educate and inspire,” said Hugh Mitchell, CEO of the Western Fair District. “We believe our new brand is a great blend of our past and future; honouring our heritage and agricultural mission while providing entertainment, sports and gaming. We believe the Western Fair District will prove to be a viable partner in the economic, social and cultural future of London and the region of Southwestern Ontario.”

As a proud member of the Old East Village community, the Western Fair District will be greener, more inviting and modern while preserving its traditional Victorian theme.

“Western Fair is moving London in the right direction”, said Mayor Joe Fontana. “WFA is pulling out the stops, pumping up the energy level and pushing the creative envelope as a community partner and these strategic actions will benefit the Association, their neighbourhood, London’s entertainment scene and our entire community. The Western Fair District is going to be good for London and, I expect, an inspiration for others.”

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WESTERN FAIR DISTRICT

BACKGROUNDER

Western Fair Association (WFA) was granted a Provincial Charter and incorporated as an agricultural society on April 23, 1867 under the Ontario Agricultural Societies Act (the establishing legislation was replaced by the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act in 1990). In the intervening years Western Fair has evolved beyond its original incarnation as an agricultural exhibition into an entertainment complex that offers the traditional fall fair, trade and consumer shows, a sports centre, a racetrack and gaming (slots) all within the parameters of its provincial charter.

Evolution of the WFA over the past 144 years has not occurred passively. Through administrative leadership the Association has developed and implemented changes in response to the needs of the membership base and the communities in the region of Southwestern Ontario that make use of the facilities and participate in its shows and programs.

The new strategic direction for the organization will take it beyond a series of venues and activities to one district that will be recognized as a preferred centre for year-round agricultural, entertainment, education, sports and gaming activities in the Southwestern Ontario region.

Western Fair District will enhance its role as a community-based organization by promoting, supporting and sponsoring various community endeavors that will contribute to the overall well being of London and region. As a proud member of London's Old East Village, the District will be greener and more inviting.

Membership

The Western Fair Association is a member-based organization with representation from agriculture and community organizations, as well as the community at large. Over the past decade, the Association has grown and evolved significantly and is now re-focusing its efforts on membership growth and development to ensure the organization's membership reflects the community and regions it serves.

The Western Fair District will dedicate an individual to the role of Membership Development Liaison to connect with current members and target new members in order to strengthen and grow the membership base. The Western Fair District will benefit from positive relationships with a number of diverse agricultural and community-based organizations ensuring the activities of the Western Fair District reflect the needs of the community.

Rebranding, a critical component of the organization's strategic plan, along with increased marketing and communications, will help people better understand 'who' this organization is and all it has to offer to its customers, partners and community.

The future vision of the Western Fair introduces a total re-branding effort, including new name, logo and marketing campaign, that will reinforce the strong brand heritage of the Western Fair with a new progressive look and energy.

About the new brand identity

The name

‘Western Fair District’ captures and honours the 140-year heritage of the organization while signaling its evolution into a year-round entertainment destination. Since the 1800s, the organization has brought people together to socialize, learn and have fun.

‘District’ speaks to a specifically defined area. It acknowledges its landmark location within the community and represents a destination for people to come and explore the variety of things to do and see.

‘The District’ distinguishes the organization from its premier event: the annual fall Fair. It also defines one location that hosts a multitude of offerings. The District becomes the destination. ‘Western Fair District’ encompasses the diversity of everything the organization offers today and it allows ample room to grow and evolve over the next 140 years.

The logo

The Western Fair District logo brings together both the corporate and entertainment sides of its brand. Each is represented by distinct fonts and colours.

The ‘Western Fair’ font has clean lines and a progressive modern feel. It speaks to this well-established brand with a proud heritage. ‘District’ is playful and whimsical. It lends itself well to the idea that this is an area where people can gather to have fun and enjoy a variety of experiences. This is echoed by combining “dependable”, “professional” blue with “creative” and “enthusiastic” orange: distinct yet complementary colours.

The icon has a number of visual images that can be interpreted from its shape and design. The first and most obvious is the letter ‘W’. Beyond that, we can visualize blocks defining the buildings and the boundaries of the District.

The tagline

The new tagline summarizes Western Fair District’s purpose and promise which is to deliver what its customers expect: a positive, entertaining experience.



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