

*The following press release is an example of something cities may wish to distribute to local media outlets or post in the “news” section of their website.*

### **[Mayor] accepts national challenge from Parliamentary Poet Laureate**

This **[March/April]**, **[Mayor]** will take up the national Poetry City challenge from Parliamentary Poet Laureate George Elliott Clarke. The challenge, facilitated by the League of Canadian Poets, asks Mayors across Canada to celebrate poetry by having a local poet read a poem at the start of a Council meeting.

On **[date]**, **[poet]** will read **[new poetry/from their book xyz/poetry composed for the occasion]** for **[Mayor]** and City Council at **[location]** for the City Council meeting.

“The opportunity to bring a poet to a council meeting is an honour,” said **[Mayor]**. “The arts are essential to our community, and we are thrilled to be able to spotlight poetry with this challenge.”

The timing of the challenge is to align with World Poetry Day on March 21 and National Poetry Month in April. Poetry City provides Canadian cities with the opportunity to bring poetry into the public eye and showcase local talent.

“The voice of the poet is a distinct voice of the people,” said Parliamentary Poet George Elliott Clarke in his nationwide challenge.

Initiated by Regina Mayor Pat Fiocco in 2012, the Poetry City challenge has been taken up in communities large and small across the country, from Whitehorse and Dawson City to Victoria and St. John’s. Past challengers include Regina Mayor Michael Fougere and Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

UNESCO World Poetry Day aims to support linguistic diversity through poetic expression and create an attractive image of poetry in the media, so that the art of poetry will no longer be considered an outdated form of art, but one which enables society as a whole to regain and assert its identity.

National Poetry Month brings together schools, publishers, booksellers, literary organizations, libraries, and poets from across the country to celebrate poetry and its vital place in Canada’s culture.

To find out more about Poetry City, including how you could be a part of the celebrations, visit [poets.ca/poetrycity](http://poets.ca/poetrycity) or contact the League of Canadian Poets by phone or email. To follow along with the 2017 challenge, like the League of Canadian Poets on Facebook or follow @CanadianPoets on Twitter.