

May 16, 2016

VIA EMAIL

Councillor Michael Thompson
Chair, Economic Development
City of Toronto

REFERENCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 17: AGENDA # ED12.4

Dear Councillor Thompson,

As you are aware, the Redpath Waterfront Festival (RWF) is an event that was created to promote Toronto as an international waterfront destination, as well as provide unique programming for the residents of our great city. Every three years, the RWF partners with the TALL SHIPS CHALLENGE® Great Lakes series to host international tall ships as our main featured programming. The RWF is proud of its long-standing support and commitment from Redpath Sugar, Ports Toronto and the Waterfront BIA.

Tourism is of vital importance to the City of Toronto and the Waterfront is now the second most visited area by tourists coming to Toronto. The RWF has promoted this area since its inception in 2010 and it has grown to become a significant event in the city. As development along Queens Quay continues there is even greater opportunity to feature the investment and success of our Waterfront.

The RWF annually receives over 225 million media and P.R. impressions (through MRP Ratings) and has strong partnerships with Bell Media, Toronto Star and CNW. Below are some of the Economic Impact Study results for the last tall ships year that took place at the Redpath Waterfront Festival in Toronto in 2013: ***(All figures are taken from an independently commissioned economic impact study done by Enigma Research Corporation.)***

- 650,000+ attended the RWF (over 28% of which reside more than 40km from the festival site)
- Economic Impact of \$7.5M – local spending of an additional \$8.3M
- Local employment supported by event – equivalent of 137 full-year jobs supported by the RWF with an estimated \$3.6M in tax revenue
- Locals spent \$3.5M at restaurants
- Tall Ships were the “Number One” reason people attended the event (85%)

In 2016 the RWF will once again welcome the tall ships. Two of the featured tall ships will be El Galeon, which is a Spanish vessel that is also a floating museum, and Draken Harald Hårfagre which is an authentic Norwegian Viking ship. We also have the Royal Canadian Navy confirmed to bring two Kingston-class vessels. We will include unique on-land programming to support all ships: a fun “Navy Obstacle Course,” as well as Spanish and Norwegian cultural entertainment.

In order to continue to attract a significant audience in a tall ships year, and strong Economic Impact results, we must focus on securing international vessels that will draw our city's multicultural visitors and residents. The international vessels charge a substantial daily appearance fee, which is in U.S. dollars. Additionally, we must pay a Canadian pilotage fee. We certainly understand that foreign vessels must have an experienced pilot on board to steer the ship through the challenging parts of the Great Lakes. However, the costs have greatly increased in the past three years since we last hosted the tall ships. The other challenge in a tall ships year is we need to recruit and confirm the ships a year in advance of them coming, which is a very risky commitment without support of the City.

In the past two tall ships years (2010 and 2013) the City of Toronto contributed \$50,000 towards the RWF in each year. Due to this precedent, and the above challenges we face for 2016, we request the city renew their support for this tall ships year by providing a contribution of \$50,000.

In 2017 the RWF has the opportunity to not only be the launch of the ONTARIO 150 Tour, a pan-provincial event that will tour the Great Lakes to celebrate Canada's 150 anniversary, but also to host Rendezvous 2017, a Sesquicentennial Signature Event. Rendezvous 2017 is an international tall ships regatta that will tour the east coast after a number of the ships stop in Toronto at the RWF over Canada Day weekend. This will see the RWF host tall ships for two years in a row. The ship costs will be covered in 2017 by the Federal Canada 150 Fund but the city would be responsible for all infrastructure, security and operations which would be on top of the RWF's regular 2017 Canada 150 programming that is planned. Therefore, in 2017 the RWF would require funding of \$250,000 from the City in order to cover all the additional costs.

The RWF has been fortunate to have funding from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Canadian Heritage since its inception. Both the provincial and federal governments require knowing if and how much the local municipality is supporting the event. This is also the case with corporations who want to know that the City is contributing to the signature event they are being asked to sponsor. Therefore, WEFE supports the recommendations set forth by the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture for a long term funding strategy, which will provide tremendous value of having tangible criteria and assurance regarding funding.

Kindest regards,



Nancy Gavin,
Chair, Water's Edge Festivals & Events

c.c. His Worship, John Tory, Mayor City of Toronto
Michael Williams, General Manager, Economic Development & Culture
Kevin Currie, Chair Waterfront BIA