



**WILLIAM F. WHITE  
INTERNATIONAL INC.**

A COMWEB GROUP MEMBER

# BU29.1.115

January 10, 2017

Councillor Gary Crawford, Chair  
Budget Committee  
City of Toronto  
100 Queen Street W  
Toronto, M5H 2N2

Thank you to the Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is David Hardy, and I am the Vice President of Industry & Government Relations at William F. White International Inc. Whites is Canada's iconic provider of camera, lighting, grip and specialty equipment to the country's film, television and digital media production industry. Our company is headquartered in Etobicoke, where we have been located for 54 years.

I am also a member of the Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Board, a group tasked with advising the Economic Development & Culture Department, and ultimately City Council, on the state of the production industry, its challenges and successes. On that Board I sit as Chair of the Customer Service Enhancement Working Group, a group mandated with identifying and proposing measures to improve the customer service experience for Torontonians, both in an out of the industry, and for those coming from other parts of the world

To say the least, it is with alarm that we have become aware of recommendations in the Transportation Services Budget with respect to new user fees geared toward our industry. Given my earlier comment as to the mandate of the TFTDMB, I strongly request that any actions that will have the effect of negatively impacting our sector first be tabled at a meeting of the TFTDMB so that the impact the proposed new fees will have on the film industry may be properly reviewed.

- 1) The impact these fees could have on production are calculated as being between \$500/\$1000 per road use instance depending on the nature of the road closure. As such, this could be an additional \$50,000 to \$100,000 in costs per production depending on the length of the production and the nature of the closure.

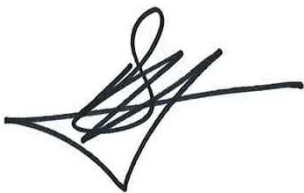
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Toronto entertains a wide variety of production: from the occasional monster like Suicide Squad at the high end budgetarily, to productions like Kim's Convenience and lower budget episodic television. Notwithstanding the fact that no production of any size wants to pull money off the screen to pay new user fees, these proposed fees would have an inordinately deleterious impact on those domestic productions that are the very bread and butter of Toronto's industry.

- 2) \$50,000 to \$100,000 in additional budgeted costs can be the difference between a production deciding on one jurisdiction or another, and will render Toronto less competitive than other filming jurisdictions in Canada, most notably Vancouver and Montreal, and far less competitive than Atlanta, our strongest competitor by far.
- 3) The proposal of additional user fees being considered by the City of Toronto is contrary to the 5 Point Plan arising out of the Mayor's last economic development trip to Los Angeles and adopted by the city. More specifically, point 3 of the plan with regard to infrastructure and on-street utilization by the film industry. This report actually instructs the city to do more to improve the servicing of Film and Television production in Toronto.
- 4) On page 15 of the "Transportation Services: 2017 Operating Budget Overview" it is acknowledged that "Film and Television production have a significant benefit to the city's economy". These fees, if adopted could result in a reduction of the number of productions shot in Toronto in 2018 when implemented. Further, it could directly result in increased production on the outskirts of Toronto in jurisdictions such as Hamilton, Durham, Markham and Pickering who do not charge similar fees. This would result in a direct loss of the economic benefit in other area's provided by film and television production in Toronto.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Hardy', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Hardy  
Vice President  
Industry & Government Relations

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