



## CITY COUNCIL REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION

### Promoting International Running Tourism in Toronto

**Date:** May 5, 2017  
**To:** Economic Development Committee  
**From:** City Council  
**Wards:** All

#### CITY COUNCIL DECISION

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City Council on April 26, 27 and 28, 2017, referred Motion MM28.9 to the Economic Development Committee.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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Councillor Mary Fragedakis, seconded by Councillor Michelle Holland, recommends that:

1. City Council request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to establish a working group composed of staff from the Economic Development and Culture Division, other appropriate City staff and representatives from local Marathons, Running Canada and the business and tourism sector to develop a strategy to strengthen running tourism in Toronto, and to report to the Economic Development Committee by April 2018 on the recommended strategy.

#### SUMMARY

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The sport of running and running tourism are both growing in popularity worldwide. Marathons in particular are important sporting and tourism events in many of the world's major cities.

The City of Toronto benefits from running tourism, which provides a significant economic impact to the business community and employment.

However, when compared to many major cities, Toronto has an opportunity to expand its economic activity through the promotion of running tourism. For example, the Boston Marathon contributes about \$192 million to the local economy. Many marathoners bring family members with them and make a vacation out of it, spending money on hotels, food, transportation, running apparel and more. Sports industry experts say Boston's payout is part of a lucrative global trend that's been playing out in Chicago, New York, London and other cities that stage major marathons drawing competitors and spectators from around the world.

Toronto has an opportunity to compete internationally to attract these competitors and spectators to our great City by leveraging Canada's position globally as a peaceful and safe nation, and a competitive currency with respect to the United States and European countries.

Canada and more specifically Toronto generally ranks within the top 10 fastest and largest marathons based on finishers. Toronto can leverage this growing international reputation to attract more runners by learning and adopting best practices, and increasing its advocacy in North America and globally, thereby creating a net positive economic impact to our City.

Tourism of this nature has the added benefit of complimenting the City's efforts to market itself for direct investment.