

Film Strategy: Spotlight on Toronto Implementation Update and Future Opportunities

The Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Board in conjunction with
Film & Entertainment Industries Staff

The TFTDM Board received final approval of Spotlight on Toronto: A Strategic Action Plan in 2017



Pillar 1: Active Advocacy

Done and Ongoing:

- Advocacy for stability in tax incentives and promotion of incentives as jurisdictional advantage
- Regular informational film-activity touchpoints between Film Office and Councillors
- Fostered collaboration with industry and with city divisions on inserting film-friendly lens to TOCore and East Harbour planning frameworks
- Supported the continuance of the TFTDM Board in new term of Council

Future:

- Advocate to provincial/federal government or relevant elected officials on importance of screen industries
- Streamline internal municipal cross-divisional efficacy

Pillar 2: Strong Fundamentals in Physical Infrastructure and Workforce Development

Done and Ongoing:

- Participated in consultations and received reports on studio space loss, replacement and expansion options
- Supported the Acquisition of Showline Studios by City of Toronto
- Council adoption of film policy directions as part of TOCore (inclusion of Film Precinct) and East Harbour
- Initiated drafting of film-friendly features parameters
- Secured film industry interest protection as part of King Street pilot model
- Supported the Port Lands Planning Framework design with continued presence at advisory committees
- Assistance to studio developers on sites search and promotion of IMIT / Gold Star Program

Future:

- Assess city-owned land for potential screen industry use and streamline internal assessment of newly available infrastructure that could be useful to the screen industry
- Pursue film-friendly priority features implementations

Pillar 2: Strong Fundamentals in Physical Infrastructure and Workforce Development

Done and Ongoing:

- xoTO Screen Industry Pathway initiatives:
 - Launch of xoTO Schools Program co-op placements
 - Initiated data gathering to map industry entry points and career options
 - Initiated data gathering on development initiatives in other jurisdictions

Future:

- xoTO Screen Industry Pathway initiatives:
 - Launch of PA Trainee program (with TESS and United Way) for underrepresented youth and systems mapping for underrepresented communities
 - Work with unions/guilds on bringing diverse candidates to their doors
 - Creation of educational tools and activities for sector attraction
 - Streamline access to Trainees for productions
 - Emphasis on diversity

Pillar 3: Exceptional Customer Service Enhancements

Done and Ongoing:

- Implementation of new FOPS (online permitting system) to service the Film Office's 48-hour turnaround and one-stop permitting system
- In 2016/2017, four new permit coordinators were added to respond to increased market demand
- Launch of xoTO Schools Program for streamlined access into 11 TDSB sites
- Launch of the xoTO Neighbourhood Givebacks program
- Funding has been ear-marked for industry green initiatives

Future:

- Gather greater data from productions on their experiences in Toronto
- Create Welcome Package for incoming projects
- Ramp up the Givebacks participation and promotion
- Determine city efforts in facilitating greening of the industry
- Identify underutilized and in-demand types of locations to allow/encourage filming

Pillar 4: Globally-recognized, Innovative Digital Media Sector

Done and Ongoing:

- Co-finance Interactive Ontario's recent study, CASO/TAAFI study and activities (notably job fair).
- Market post/VFX/Animation-specific achievements in promotion of the jurisdiction

Future:

- Partner with globally successful, Toronto-based digital/tech companies to promote our industry and attract investment
- Create a strategy to promote Toronto innovation as it applies to screen industries
- Work with domestic and international partners to attract 'studios of the future' (5G AI enabled, VR/AR, motion capture, etc.) in order to create an ongoing competitive advantage
- Seek out partnerships between screen-content and gaming/interactive industries to expand service and relevance where appropriate

Pillar 5: Dynamic Branding and Strong International & Business Partnerships

Done and Ongoing:

- xoTO brand attached to all activities and collateral (for investment attraction and to instill Torontonians pride)
- Yearly Mayor's Los Angeles Mission in partnership with industry
- Yearly xoTO House during TIFF
- 2 TSA and online public campaigns per year & yearly social media presence
- Co-fund Los Angeles marketing consultant with Ontario Creates
- Logo sent to all productions for inclusion in their closing credits

Future:

- Assess non-US priority markets for investment attraction
- Research the perception of Toronto as a brand and review brand positioning
- As more studio space launches, create new marketing strategy to grow production volume

2019-2022 Priority areas:

Infrastructure: physical growth + film friendliness

Workforce Development: education + capacity growth + diversity

Marketing & Customer Service: customer experience + brand/marketing strategy + greening

Innovation: strategy to embed innovation as jurisdictional advantage



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