



Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM7.9	ACTION			Ward: 11
-------	--------	--	--	----------

Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema - Support of efforts for Provincial Legislation for Property Tax Exemption - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Michael Thompson

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Michael Thompson, recommends that:

1. City Council confirm its support of the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema in its efforts to obtain Provincial legislation that would enable City Council to exempt Hot Docs from property taxes related to the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, 506 Bloor Street West.

Summary

In 1994, a professional association of independent filmmakers from across Canada (CIFC, now DOC) established Hot Docs. In 1996, Hot Docs was separately incorporated as an independent, non-profit organization and a year later acquired charitable status from Revenue Canada. In 1999, Hot Docs made a dramatic shift in how it delivered its mandate, opening the Festival to a public audience for the first time and drawing a crowd of 7,000. Starting off with no full-time staff, one computer, one phone, and a calling to find, screen, develop, launch, and support the best docs and their makers, Hot Docs grew out of an existing void in the arts spectrum. The organization's success stems from growing the profile and public accessibility of creative documentary works, and from growing levels of activity while ensuring programming excellence.

Today, Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival is North America's largest documentary festival (and second largest film festival), conference and market. Each year Hot Docs welcomes over 223,000 attendees to over 470 screenings on 16 Toronto screens, including 123,000 students in Grades 7 to 12. Hot Docs serves 2,698 emerging and established documentary professionals, 450 programmers, commissioning editors, buyers and distributors worldwide, and 325 accredited media representatives.

Hot Docs Festival has an incredibly diverse audience, due in part to the incredible range of

films, subject matter, geographic representation and filmmaker perspectives presented each year. To grow the diversity of its audience base, the organization takes pride in collaborating with other organizations and events noted for their specializations in servicing specific communities and increasing community access to documentaries that advance their work.

Hot Docs manages several year-round programs that support the organization's mandate:

- Doc Soup, a monthly screening and discussion series in Toronto and Calgary;
- Docs For Schools, connecting over 123,000 students (50,000 in Toronto) Grades 7 to 12 with stimulating documentary films linked directly to the Ontario curriculum. A national Docs for Schools Program is under development; and
- Hot Docs Showcase, bringing the Festival's top documentary films to audiences outside of Toronto and Ontario.

Throughout the year, Hot Docs also provides much-needed financial support to documentary film artists facing financing gaps at critical stages in their projects through three separate production funds.

In 2012 and in partnership with Blue Ice Group, Hot Docs began managing operations for the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema, a century old 727-seat theatre located in Toronto's Annex neighbourhood. In June 2016 a generous gift from the Rogers Family enabled Hot Docs to purchase the since renamed Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, giving a permanent home base for independent doc makers and the best in documentary programming into the future.

The Cinema is a Toronto landmark, community hub, and one of the only documentary-focused cinemas in the world. Annually, the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema screens more than 200 Canadian and international documentaries for 200,000 people and maintains a membership of 8,500 committed documentary lovers. The Cinema continues to solidify its reputation as a preeminent exhibitor of documentary film, while expanding the offering of live events and community gatherings.

The 2018 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and its associated non-Festival activities generated an estimated \$54,402,190 in actual and expected expenditure in Canada. This translates to a positive estimated impact of \$54.7 million on the total GDP of Ontario, 657 jobs and \$19.4 million in tax revenue. The Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema has never been in debt and despite all of Hot Docs economic contributions to the City of Toronto; only 2 percent of the Hot Docs annual budget is made up of City of Toronto funding.

As a registered charity, Hot Docs currently receives a 40 percent property tax rebate. A property tax exemption would provide an estimated \$70,000 in additional assistance to Hot Docs, which would allow the organization to continue growing the impact of documentary film across the City, Province and Country. It will also enable Hot Docs to further grow initiatives designed to directly support Toronto artists, to engage communities across the Toronto's neighbourhoods, and to grow accessibility, diversity and equity across programs for public audiences and practitioners.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM7.9