

October 7, 2024
City Clerk's Office - Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Via e-mail: clerk@toronto.ca

Re: EX17.5 - Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport - Runway End Safety Areas

Dear Mayor Chow and members of City Council,

My name is Magali Simard, I am the Director of Industry and Community Relations at Cinespace Studios Toronto, the largest owner and operator of film and television studios in Toronto. I am writing to you to express our full support of PortsToronto's proposals and specific request to extend the term of the Tripartite agreement term beyond 2033 in order to secure financing for what is an essential infrastructure investment required for safety compliance and the ongoing operation of the airport. Enabling the construction of a RESA that provides community benefits is key to modernizing this strategic transportation platform. Billy Bishop Airport is one of our most important, modern assets. Future-proofing it should be a priority for City Council as Toronto's population and industries continue to expand.

Cinespace Studios operates 1.4 million sq.ft. of prime production space as we welcome some of the greatest and biggest productions in the world, in an industry that brings \$2.5B of investment to Toronto each year and employs over 35,000 talented Torontonians. We are geographically located in the Ports Lands - where the majority of the film industry operates - and in Etobicoke. We are set to expand in the Marine Terminal as of later this year at 8 Unwin Avenue. We are investing in this bustling creative industry and what we see as Toronto's chance to clinch the next level of global success in the years and decades ahead. To do so, our city needs to be market-ready.

Like many industries, our people are constantly on the move. The ease of access to the city is a fundamental in how we conduct business and win productions to choose Toronto over competing jurisdictions. Pearson alone is not sufficient, and it is far from the downtown core. Frequent and swift access to other Canadian and American cities is key to our success and Billy Bishop Airport is a major market advantage. It has become a big selling point for the film and television industry especially in the east-end/Port Lands, where the majority of film and television studios are located and set to expand. We rely on many factors to remain competitive globally, one of which is to offer modern infrastructure and transportation access. It is part of our power of attraction.

As we see it, PortsToronto should receive certainty as to the airport's future, and we hope to see Billy Bishop expand appropriately in the coming years, to accommodate growing business needs, welcome the investment it facilitates, and get Torontonians moving in and out of the city faster. On a non-business level, there is nothing like a weekend getaway via that airport. Billy Bishop Airport is for everyone, not the select few. Its success and the advantages it brings to Toronto are well beyond proven. It is a key asset we should all embrace – it's what the future looks like.

Thank you for your attention,



Magali Simard
Director, Industry & Community Relations
Cinespace Studios Toronto