

FILMONTARIO

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July 10, 2026

Toronto City Council
Economic and Community Development Committee
c/o Nancy Martins
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Economic and Community Development Committee – Meeting 30
Agenda Item 2026 E30.8

Dear Chair Bravo and Members of the Committee:

Please accept the following comments related to the above-noted agenda item, regarding the usability of Old City Hall as a filming location.

As you may know, FilmOntario is an industry consortium representing both unions and private companies in the province's film and television industry, the majority of whom live, work and own businesses in the City of Toronto. Together, our members represent \$2.7 billion of direct spending in the province, supporting over 45,000 jobs. The bulk of this important economic activity takes place in and around Toronto.

We are writing in support of the [Decision Letter](#) put forward by the City of Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Advisory Board, requesting that this Committee direct the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to work with the industry to review the conditions affecting film and television production at Old City Hall and to implement any cost and operational amendments coming out of that consultation.

Old City Hall is truly a tremendous asset to the City of Toronto as a filming location. We commend the Film Office and the Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM) division on the work they have done to date to bring this location on line, and to support the industry in accessing the location. However, our members have reported that they have encountered some challenges while using the space.

Earlier this year, the City of Toronto Film Office was recognized as the Film Commission of the Year at the Global Production Awards. This Award is a true recognition of the work the Film Office does to recognize the realities of filming in the City, and the needs of the industry when coordinating location filming with a large urban centre. These needs include cost effectiveness, timely responses, and predictability of production expenses.

All of these needs come into play when productions are considering using Old City Hall as a location. As you may know, global film and television production is an extremely competitive business and cost is the primary factor when choosing where to shoot. If Toronto is to continue to both attract the best productions from around the world and support Ontario and Toronto-

based producers, costs need to be reasonable and competitive with other jurisdictions. The room-by-room charges at Old City Hall, some of which are incurred on a pass-through basis, add up quickly for cost-conscious productions and can be a deterrent.

In addition, productions have often reported unexpected or surprise charges that are billed after the fact. Like all businesses, film and TV producers work with tight budgets. Every dollar spent on a location means there are fewer dollars to spend elsewhere on the production, and when costs exceed the budget, tough decisions need to be made. If the costs cannot be predicted, producers are unlikely to return to a location if they can avoid it.

Finally, production schedules are often fast-moving and location decisions need to be made quickly. It is therefore crucial that location scouts and other key decision-makers have the ability to view a location on short notice, as part of a busy day that may have many moving parts. Having staff available who are able to tour film personnel at Old City Hall on a more flexible basis would be greatly appreciated.

As mentioned above, Old City Hall is an amazing asset for the City of Toronto's production community, and has the potential to become an iconic location in the City. We are confident that, working with the industry, the City can adjust some of the current practices and procedures to improve its usability as a filming location in a way that will work for everyone.

FilmOntario is ready to assist in this consultation in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Lynch
Managing Director and Counsel, FilmOntario

cc: Councillor Paula Fletcher
Chair, City of Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Advisory Board

Jayson Mosek
Vice-Chair, City of Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Advisory Board

Bobby Donches
A/Film Commissioner & Director of Entertainment Industries, City of Toronto