



**The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office**

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

June 24, 2020

**VIA EMAIL: [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)**

The Honourable John Horgan  
Office of the Premier  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier:

**Re: Letter of Support – Film Studio in the Capital Regional District, British Columbia**

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Saanich Council at their meeting of June 23, 2020 resolved as follows:

***“That Council write a letter of support regarding the economic and cultural benefits movie studios would bring to the region to the Honourable Minister Joyce Murray, the Office of Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Finance Minister of British Columbia, and the Premier of British Columbia, and request they consider applications from projects seeking financial support.”***

The CRD has many unique and diverse locations but require this type of infrastructure to provide for medium to large productions. Companies are demanding studio space and recent changes in the industry, specifically with the popularity of streaming, have made the need for studios ever more apparent. Greater Victoria has the unique opportunity of being able to provide lifestyle and climate for year-round filming opportunities. For more details please see the report to Saanich Council, dated June 19, 2020, attached.

We hope that you will recognize the exceptional opportunity that will only continue to expand if an approval of a film studio was endorsed in the Capital Regional District.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support and if there are any further comments or questions I can be reached by phone: (250) 475-5510 or by email: [mayor@saanich.ca](mailto:mayor@saanich.ca).

Sincerely,

Fred Haynes  
Mayor

c. Saanich Council  
Enc.

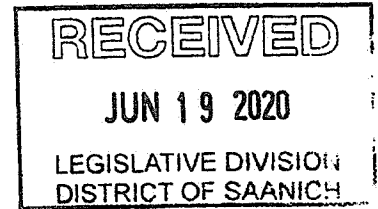


The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

C Jun 22/20

To: Saanich Council
From: Mayor Fred Haynes
Date: June 19, 2020
Subject: Letter to the Federal and Provincial Governments requesting financial support for movie studios in Saanich and the region



BACKGROUND

Recently Premier Horgan spoke highly of the film industry in British Columbia, and that the Province was open for the movie business. At the same time Federal Minister, the Honourable Catherine McKenna, was quoted saying: "Ottawa seeks 'shovel-ready' projects for a post shutdown stimulus plan." Together, these two statements offer timely synergy for projects to bring movie studios to Saanich and elsewhere on the peninsula that have been developing over the last two years.

This project is being led by representatives of educational groups, the Victoria Film Commission, local industry professionals and interested local developers. The project includes the construction of three film studios of 18,000 square feet, production office space, and classrooms. From the leadership groups, I understand the project is seeking both Provincial and Federal support. With the financial assistance of the Federal Government, construction could begin almost immediately. The benefits to the economy of the South Island would be enormous.

Typically a production filming in an 18,000 square foot studio would employ over 200 people. A complex with three studios would provide more than 600 new jobs, and bring an immense amount of ancillary spending in the community. As all studios in Vancouver are at full occupancy, there is considerable market confidence that these facilities would be pre-booked immediately on commencing construction. Keith Woods, President of IATSE Local 891, has written a letter in support of this proposal (not attached).

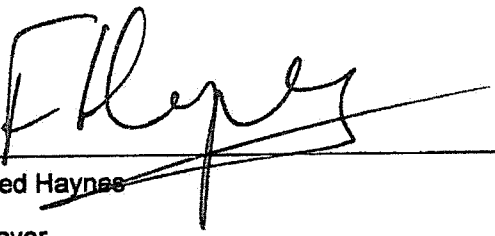
The use of Federal and Provincial funds to develop infrastructure for the film industry in British Columbia is not without precedent. The first studio complex in Vancouver, Bridge Studios, originally occupied Crown land. The film industry now produces \$3.4B in annual revenue in this province. The estimated total budget for construction of this project is \$24M. With \$10M of financial assistance on the Federal level, this project could proceed immediately as a successful public-private partnership.

This report is to raise Council's awareness of the opportunity and request their support for a letter to draw this unique opportunity to the attention of the Honourable Minister Joyce Murray, the office of Western Economic Diversification Canada, and the Premier of British Columbia in order to garner Federal and Provincial financial support for the project. As noted, this project will be of

immense benefit to the resurgent film industry post COVID-19, and the economy of Southern Vancouver Island in general.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council write a letter of support regarding the economic and cultural benefits movie studios would bring to the region to the Honourable Minister Joyce Murray, the office of Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Finance Minister of British Columbia, and the Premier of British Columbia, and requests they consider applications from projects seeking financial support.



Fred Haynes  
Mayor

### **Attachments:**

Letter of Support from Saanich Council to the Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training, dated March 12, 2020  
Council Minutes from the Meeting of March 9, 2020



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March 12, 2020

**VIA EMAIL: [AVED.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AVED.Minister@gov.bc.ca)**

The Honourable Melanie Mark  
Ministry of Advanced Education,  
Skills and Training  
PO Box 9080 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister:

**Re: Letter of Support – Film Studio in the CRD**

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Saanich Council at their meeting of March 9, 2020 resolved as follows:

“That Saanich support, in principle, the establishment of a film studio in the Capital Regional District (CRD) as the greater Victoria area would greatly benefit from the economic advantage of a film studio”.

The CRD has many unique and diverse locations but require this type of infrastructure to provide for medium to large productions. Companies are demanding studio space and recent changes in the industry, specifically with the popularity of streaming, have made the need for studios ever more apparent. Greater Victoria has the unique opportunity of being able to provide lifestyle and climate for year-round filming opportunities.

We hope that you will recognize the exceptional opportunity that will only continue to expand if an approval of a film studio was endorsed in the Capital Regional District.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter of support and if there are any further comments or questions I can be reached at 250.475.5510.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Haynes'.

**Fred Haynes  
Mayor**

c. Saanich Council

acceptance.

- Police statistics show that 85% of drivers operate at safe levels but 15% do not.

In response to questions from Council, the Director of Engineering stated:

- Staff will make contact with other municipal engineering departments in the region to discuss the educational, enforcement and infrastructure issues.
- Potentially could be a joint application dependent on the municipal response.
- Work will take place in the spring of 2020.
- First phase, which closed this week, is to look at e-devices being allowed on local streets and cycle tracks, such as scooters.
- Second phase of the pilot project for the fall of 2020, is to lower default speed limits.
- The CRD does not have jurisdiction over our roads.

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

- Apprehensive in the enforceability. Education is important but the tools to enforce the speed limits are also important.
- Evidence suggests that vehicles traveling at 30 km/h reduce the likeliness of collision and death or injury.

In response to a question from Council, the Director of Engineering stated:

- Will consider involving ICBC and the CRD Traffic committee in discussions about educating the public.

**The Motion was then Put and CARRIED**

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 The Director of Engineering left the meeting at 8:46 p.m.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

1220-20  
Film Studio

**LETTER OF SUPPORT – FILM STUDIO IN THE CRD**

Letter of support from Mayor Haynes for a film studio to be built in the Capital Regional District (CRD) to be forwarded, as an endorsement to the Honourable Melanie Mark, the Minister of Advanced Education.

The Mayor introduced this new item and brought forward a letter of support for a film studio to be built in the CRD. He requested that Council suspend the rules of the Council Procedure Bylaw to be able to discuss the letter.

**MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: “That the rules of procedure contained in the Council Procedure Bylaw be temporarily suspended to allow Council to consider the Mayor’s Letter of Support regarding a film studio in the Capital Regional District (CRD).”**

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

- More public engagement needs to be done.
- The letter of support is also linked to an educational package to allow more training of people in the movie industry.
- Consistent with what Council has signaled it would like to encourage.