SUBJECT: 2006 Year End Film & Television Office Activity Report (PED07080) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report PED07080, “2006 Year End Film & Television Office Activity Report”, be received.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

2006 was another busy year for filming in Hamilton with 94 productions shooting in Hamilton. The level of activity echoes 2005, with 90 productions utilizing locations in the City. Film activity in both 2005 and 2006 represents a major increase over previous years.

BACKGROUND:

Hamilton experienced another busy year for filming in 2006 with 94 productions totalling 1,280 prep, shoot and wrap days in the City. These figures match 2005 statistics at 90 productions and 1,330 prep, shoot and wrap days. In terms of direct spending in the community, the Film & Television Office estimated a spending of $15.5 million in 2005 and approximately $15 million in 2006. Both years represent a significant increase over previous years. In 2003 and 2004, 45 and 48 productions filmed in Hamilton respectively.
Large productions such as The State Within, Talk to Me, Man of the Year, The Company, Away from Her, Closing the Ring, Skinwalkers and Hairspray plus a number of new and returning TV shows including ReGenesis, Jeff Ltd., MVP, and Would Be Kings, all chose Hamilton for their location shooting.

These positive trends in Hamilton are not echoed in the rest of Ontario or, more specifically, in the Greater Toronto Area. In 2005 and again in 2006, Hamilton experienced an impressive increase in location shooting while activity in Toronto decreased. Although the industry in Ontario is still worth more than $1 billion per year, the activity levels of both domestic and international filming (in Ontario) are declining. The weakness of the U.S. dollar has been very detrimental to the industry as well as 9/11, SARS, competition from other provinces, states and countries and now the ACTRA strike which is ongoing as of the beginning of 2007.

Hamilton remains busy for a number of reasons, most important of which is the 10% regional bonus provided by the Provincial government for domestic productions which film outside of the GTA. This regional bonus helps to bring the productions to Hamilton and we are keeping them here. Hamilton offers great scenery, landscapes and diverse buildings along with an ‘open for business’ attitude. We offer unbeatable service through the City and our partners and the citizens of Hamilton welcome the film community with open arms. It is not our goal to ‘take business away from Toronto’ but to grow the industry in Ontario overall by providing the industry a broader scope of alternatives in Ontario.

Our next important goal is to move forward to build more of a base of production in Hamilton. This would include more production/studio space, more Hamilton based production companies (including suppliers to the industry) and more Hamilton residents employed in this creative industry.

To this end, in 2006 we launched a new ad campaign called, “Hamilton, Why Shoot Anywhere Else?” This campaign has been very well received in Hamilton and in our target markets and we will continue to expand the concept into 2007. Awards have been received from the Association of Film Commissioners International and the Economic Development Association of Canada.

We added a temporary staff support position to handle the extra workload in the Film & Television Office. We are hoping to make this a permanent position in 2007.

As part of the Film & Television Office marketing initiatives and to build relationships throughout North America, staff attended the Banff World Television Festival and participated in the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) locations trade show in Santa Monica, with the Ontario Media Development Corporation (OMDC), the Cities of Mississauga and Toronto.
On a local level, staff have started working more closely with Hamilton’s Arts and Culture groups such as the Factory and the Cotton Centre for the Arts to grow local film and culture-based industries. As well, we are creating an inventory of available industrial space as part of an initiative to bring a film studio to Hamilton (or develop a studio locally).

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

n/a

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

n/a

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

n/a

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

n/a

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

n/a

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. ☑ Yes  ☐ No

Arts, culture, archaeological and cultural heritage are supported and enhanced.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced.  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

Economic Well-Being is enhanced.  ☑ Yes  ☐ No

Cultural industries are enhanced.
The economic base is diversified.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?  ☑ Yes  ☐ No

:JN