

**Deborah Liske**

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**Subject:** FW: 2019 Township of Esquimalt Request to Council for annual funding.docx \*MAIL LOG\*  
**Attachments:** 2019 Township of Esquimalt Request to Council for annual funding.docx

**From:** Kathleen Gilbert [mailto:kdgilbert@filmvictoria.com]  
**Sent:** February-20-19 11:11 AM  
**To:** Jodi Graham  
**Subject:** 2019 Township of Esquimalt Request to Council for annual funding.docx

Dear Esquimalt Mayor and Council,  
This year we are asking Municipalities to consider putting us in a three or four year funding model so that we can begin to work within a more dependable budget, it also allows staff to concentrate on building this industry and bringing more jobs and economic development to the Region instead of months applying for and defending 13 grant applications. Langford already has us as a regular budget line item, Victoria has just voted to fund us at \$45,000 yearly without us having to do a yearly ask and I just met with the mayor of Saanich who will be bringing forth a recommendation that they fund us at \$45,000 for four years. He expects that it will be well received. Sooke has also agreed to look at a different funding model for us. We have not made the ask to Oak Bay or the other municipalities yet but will be asking all municipalities to consider this. Thank you for your consideration.

Kathleen Gilbert  
Film Commissioner  
Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission  
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<b>CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT</b>		
For Information:		
<input type="checkbox"/> CAO	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayor/Council	
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<b>RECEIVED: FEB 20 2019</b>		
Referred: <i>ANJA</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> For Action	<input type="checkbox"/> For Response	<input type="checkbox"/> COTW
<input type="checkbox"/> For Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Agenda	<input type="checkbox"/> IC



Township of Esquimalt  
Attn: Mayor Desjardins & Council

February 19, 2019,

### **TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT: REQUEST TO COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING**

The BC Film, Television and Digital Media Industry is growing exponentially with over \$3.4 billion dollars of direct spending in the provincial economy last year and the highest employment growth of any sector, now employing 65,000 BC residents. With production at an all time high in the province, there is no better time to develop a sustainable creative sector in Esquimalt and the 12 other municipalities we serve and promote. In 2018, direct industry spending in the Capital Region brought \$20M to the local economy, which is significant but still less than 1% of the total spending in the Province. The Capital Region has every reason to aim for 10% of the provincial market, delivering \$300M annually.

### **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

The purpose of the Film Commission is to foster economic development in the Capital Region, by providing high quality services to attract film, television and new media production. We represent and promote the Capital Region at industry conferences, across the web and by working directly with potential producers. The infrastructure we have built includes an online location library with over 1800 registered places to film in Greater Victoria, a local business directory, and database for crew (to demonstrate we have an experienced labour pool), training courses, membership, sponsorship and volunteer programs and a physical office to serve as hub for the film industry in the region. We require ongoing support from the municipalities of the Capital Region that we serve in order to maintain and expand this infrastructure.

Without sustainable financial assistance the Film Commission would have to significantly reduce its hours and services, translating into fewer film productions in the CRD, less direct spending and fewer jobs for local crew. It would also severely limit our region's potential as a location for future filmmaking since the area would fall off the radar of the industry. This would be especially unfortunate with Vancouver approaching maximum capacity for filming. Producers are actively searching for new, film friendly locations.

Over the years, the budget for the Film Commission has fluctuated from a high of \$372,197 in 2002 to a low of \$154,689 in 2009. The low in 2009 was the result of less demand for Film Commission services due to our exclusion from the distant tax credit, which our current Film Commissioner successfully lobbied to reverse in 2014. Our budget for 2018 was \$220,000 and already in 2019 we have been challenged with a deficit budget, caused by decreased funding from two key municipalities. Through extra fund-raising efforts, and by foregoing marketing trips to LA, we will be able to end this year with a balanced budget. However, it is obviously counterproductive for the Film Commission to cut essential programs such as our marketing trips, in a time when the provincial industry is expanding. The following changes are necessary if the Film Commission is to continue to offer the high quality service expected by industry professionals:

### **Increased Dependable Long-Term Funding:**

A budget of \$300,000 is needed to maximize growth and reach market potential. The current lack of medium or long-term funding results in 14 separate grant applications every year to CRD municipalities and the province. A great deal of time and resources are spent every year on fundraising when this time should be better used promoting the region we serve. A reduced budget also means that an unfortunately large percentage must be spent on operations, putting us in a reactive stance with our clients. For example, we developed a proactive, multi-platform ad campaign "We Love Film Too", to reach international producers, but lack the resources to properly execute it. We also need to attend industry events in L.A. and other film markets to better understand our 'target audience', and subsequently attract their business to the Capital Region.

### **Maintain and Increase Staff**

Our current staffing model includes the Film Commissioner, a Production Services Coordinator and an Administrative Coordinator. The Film Commissioner provides strategic leadership, builds and maintains stakeholder relationships, and fosters the growth of our creative media industry. The Production Service Coordinator manages our primary (and locally active) film production clients, film crew and local business relationships. Our Administrative Coordinator manages sponsorship, membership, volunteers and our education/outreach programs.

Without at least these three critical positions, the work of the film commission suffers and it becomes difficult to maintain the high quality of service expected by a demanding industry. Currently the Commission supports two of the three staff on an hourly basis, with insufficient resources to create salaried positions with competitive pay and benefits, reduce turnover and properly develop the areas of service these staff provide. Three full time positions are needed to meet the current demand for our service; further expansion would help us achieve our full potential.

With a better financial resource base we hope to at least double the amount of local production in the next four years. The City of Victoria has approved regular dependable annual funding for the Film Commission and Saanich is also in the process of considering a four year agreement. **We respectfully ask that Esquimalt Council provide the Film Commission with a four-year financial commitment of \$5,000.00 annually.** Thank you for your consideration and your partnership in jobs and economic development over the years.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kathleen Gilbert  
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***WE Love Film Too!***