

TPLC Pinewood Expansion

Lights, Camera, Action ... Film and TV industry set to expand again in the Port Lands

The City's thriving film and television industry needs additional production facilities and a new agreement between Pinewood Toronto Studios and the Toronto Port Lands Company will bring more jobs and economic activity to the region.

TPLC and Pinewood Toronto Studios have entered into a long-term lease for an additional 1.75 acres in the Port Lands that will be home to a new 135,000-square-foot film and television support facility. The new facility will complement Pinewood's existing state of the art, 300,000-square-foot "purpose-built" studio campus that already serves as the anchor of the Studio District in the Toronto Port Lands.

This latest agreement is a crucial step in achieving Pinewood Toronto Studios' plans to eventually grow its facilities to 600,000 square feet.

"Toronto Port Lands Company is pleased with this development initiative by Pinewood Toronto Studios that will reclaim previously underutilized brownfields to create useable, employment space," says TPLC President and CEO Michael Kraljevic.

Blake Steels, President of Pinewood Toronto Studios, says the expansion "builds our capacity to host additional productions simultaneously on our lot. This means more films for Toronto which is good for the whole film industry, the whole city."

Pinewood Toronto Studios currently has 12 stages in the Port Lands, including North America's largest purpose-built soundstage – the 46,000-square-foot Mega Stage. Its facilities are soundproofed, clear-span and equipped with power and supporting infrastructure to accommodate productions of all sizes and budgets.

The studio has hosted some of the largest productions in Canada, including the upcoming summer of 2016 blockbuster *Suicide Squad*. The 2016 Oscar nominee for Best Film, *Room*, was also shot at Pinewood Toronto Studios.

The Studio District in the Port Lands is key to the City of Toronto's strategy to attract domestic and international film and TV production. In 2014, production companies invested a record \$1.23 billion in on-location filming in Toronto.

A decade ago, the City was losing big productions to other cities. Research sponsored by TPLC indicated a need for purpose-built studio space and large sound stages – rather than converting large facilities like empty warehouses, as had been done previously.

Thirty acres of land that was previously derelict and bringing in no tax dollars in the Port Lands was remediated by TPLC so new sound stages and other facilities could be built. Pinewood Toronto Studios opened for business in the Port Lands in 2008 and expanded again in 2013.

"Since our initial investment in 2005 to establish an anchor film tenant in the port area, we consider ourselves much more than just a landlord but also a catalyst for the film business in Toronto," says Kraljevic.

Councillor Michael Thompson, Chair of Toronto's Economic Development Committee, called the latest expansion "a great example of an effective cooperative partnership between Toronto's public and private sectors."

"The expansion at Pinewood Toronto will create well-paid jobs, generate a robust economic spill-over, and increase the City's revenue. Projects like this one support the growth of our film and television sector and add to our clout as a North American industry leader."

Less than three kilometers from the downtown core on Toronto's eastern waterfront, Pinewood Toronto Studios currently sits on approximately 14 acres of land, with options to expand to 30 acres.

Expansion plans include upgrades and improvements to Pinewood Toronto's film and television studios, flexible spaces for media and innovation, and complementary uses, such as culture, green spaces, retail and hotel. This expansion plan will foster a strong community that builds upon the film, television and digital media cluster already established in this area.

Pinewood Toronto Studios has notified the City of its pending application for all necessary permits to commence construction. Approvals of this new project are anticipated in 2016 with occupancy by film clients targeted for 2018.