

MOTION ON NOTICE

5. Support Vancouver's Digital Media Sector

MOVER: Mayor Gregor Robertson

SECONDER:

WHEREAS

1. The interactive digital media and visual effects sectors are a major part of Vancouver's economy, employing more than 25,000 employees in 1300 companies;
2. There are a number of internationally recognized post-secondary institutions in Vancouver that produce highly skilled graduates for these sectors, which supports local hiring and a robust regional workforce that makes up a significant component of Vancouver's global advantage;
3. The Province of British Columbia has established an effective tax credit policy that helps to attract companies in some digital media sectors, and has worked with the Government of Canada to lead changes in immigration policy that has contributed to the establishment of Vancouver as one of the top three global clusters in the world, behind only London and Los Angeles;
4. Vancouver has an Economic Action Strategy that has made job creation and investment attraction an explicit priority in sectors like interactive digital media and visual effects, and has successfully supported the creation of over 1,000 jobs in the last three years alone in this industry;
5. Vancouver is gaining strength and growing in some segments of the interactive digital media sectors, like visual effects and animation, but is seeing a rapid decline in other segments like console gaming;
6. Under the Ontario Interactive Media Tax Credit, video game developers are eligible to receive up to a 37.5 per cent tax credit with additional stacked incentives, compared to the 17.5 per cent offered by BC's Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit, which limits stackable incentives;
7. These strategies and incentive policies in other jurisdictions, such as Ontario and Quebec, have influenced the decisions of gaming companies to leave Vancouver, dropping the region's ranking from Number 1 to Number 3 over the past 3 years;

8. The departure of these companies and the talent associated with them has implications on the broader talent pool for Interactive Digital Media and screen-based sectors that could eventually threaten the stability of the entire cluster.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- A. THAT the Mayor write to the Premier and the Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation, encouraging them to explore options to close the gap with the incentive programs in other Canadian provinces in order to protect these important BC sectors which are becoming vulnerable to inter-provincial poaching.
- B. THAT the Mayor write to the Federal Minister of Industry to promote the idea of a national interactive digital media strategy that would strengthen the entire country's cluster in these sectors, as opposed to the current approach which only serves to weaken our global competitiveness.
- C. THAT the Mayor, as Chair of the Vancouver Economic Commission, ask the VEC to proactively pursue solutions that can resolve the challenges facing the digital media sector by working with Vancouver's industry leaders, and report back to Council.

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