

## **City Council Approves Measures for Film and TV Studios**

At its meeting on March 15, the Bayonne City Council approved four items on its agenda related to the construction of the 1888 Studios by Togus Urban Renewal LLC. The items included three ordinances and one resolution that concerned various financial aspects of the studio complex, which is slated for the former Texaco property in the southwestern corner of Bayonne. I would like to thank the Council Members for supporting this extraordinary generator of future economic growth in Bayonne. They spent several months analyzing the studio proposal and listening to both the developer's representatives and the public at Council meetings.

Construction is expected to start later in 2023 with a projected completion date at some point in 2025. Togus projects providing approximately 2,600 building trades union jobs during the construction phase and an estimated 2,100 permanent jobs when the studios are fully occupied. All of the creative and technical jobs in the entertainment industry are heavily unionized. The developer has promised to hold employment fairs for both the construction jobs and the studio positions.

The 1888 Studios will be the biggest source of new employment in Bayonne since World War II. The studios will have a very positive economic impact on Bayonne. We expect the production companies to spend money on local goods

and services. We expect that the film and television workers will patronize local restaurants, shops, and professional offices.

The 1888 Studios will be available for lease to companies in the film and television industries.

Since I became mayor in 2014, I have worked hard to encourage investment and redevelopment in our city, especially in areas of former industrial sites that no longer play a role in our city.

The land in question consists of thirteen separate lots that were home to the Texaco refinery from the early 1900's until it closed in the 1980's. Texaco merged with Chevron in 2001. Chevron, the most recent previous owner of the site, issued a request for proposals (RFP) for the development of the land in spring 2020. After considering various proposals, Chevron has narrowed the selection down to one potential developer, Togus.

At the request of the prospective developer and the owner, the City of Bayonne amended the original redevelopment plan to allow the construction of a movie studio. The film industry will be coming to one of the places where it began. Bayonne was the home to Centaur, the first independent film studio in the country. It was founded in 1907. Centaur's West Coast division was called Nestor. It became

the first motion picture company in Hollywood in 1911. Bayonne is proud to welcome the film industry back home.