

CITY OF TAFT

FILM

PRODUCTION

INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

City of Taft
209 East Kern Street
Taft, CA 93268
Phone: (661) 763-1222
Fax: (661) 765-2480

May 15, 1998

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INTRODUCTION

California is currently losing nearly \$3 billion annually in production to other states that have become aggressive in luring film projects away. This phenomenon, dubbed "runaway production," is costing California not only significant revenue, but also many, many jobs.

The California Film Commission (CFC) was established within the California Trade and Commerce Agency to attract and promote film production throughout the state. The CFC acts as a "red-tape cutter" for production problems on the local level and as an intermediary for businesses and communities in their dealings with film companies.

The California Film Commission's goal is to make it easier for you to say "yes" to film production on your property and ensure that all of your filming experiences are positive.

Outlined in the pages ahead are descriptions of film industry personnel, types of production, required City of Taft Permit/Application and several insurance forms.

This booklet provides information to the business community and individual homeowners on the unique characteristics of film production. The information provided should help individuals ask the right questions and work more closely with productions requesting to film on public and/or private property. The booklet is designed to address concerns, remove some of the mystery about filming on location, and increase the "comfort level" in having public and/or private property used as a location.

WHAT IS FILM DEVELOPMENT?

The motion picture industry employs 234,000 Californians. However, competition from other states is luring a significant portion of film production away from California. Nearly \$3 billion in production is leaving California annually, taking with it thousands of jobs and tax revenues. The term for such losses - runaway production - describes those feature film, television and commercial productions that leave California to shoot in other states and countries.

Film production is a clean, non-polluting, quick injection of revenue for a local community. When a feature film goes on location requiring overnight stays, the cast and crew will often remain in that location for two to six weeks. Expenditures for companies filming on location average \$26,222 per day.

The impact on various local businesses can be significant. The average feature film involves a crew of 90 people and a cast of 10 principal actors, requiring 100 rooms. In addition, each cast and crew member receives approximately \$40 per diem which can mean \$4,000 spent per day on "personal expenses," like meals.

Often the company will bring only key crew members and hire locally, depending on the availability of qualified technicians. Local dry cleaners and laundries will be required for both the personal requirements of cast and crew and the needs of the wardrobe department. Production companies will often call upon local financial institutions to deposit operating monies and act as payroll companies. Gas stations, lumber yards and hardware stores can all expect a boost in business during film production.

Producers are looking for realism in everything from feature films and weekly action shows to orange juice commercials. In most cases, the production manager, retained by the producer to hire staff and crew for a project, develops the shooting schedule and determines the necessity, cost and duration of a location shoot. Location scouts investigate possible sites, often with assistance from the local film commission. Then the director, producer and production manager review the selections and may scout the location again themselves. The following types of production may shoot "on location":

Feature Films (for theatrical release): Approximately 700 feature films are shot in the U.S. every year. The average budget is over \$20 million and production schedules are much longer than television or commercials. Pre-production can be 30 to 90 days and, during that time, locations are chosen and budgets are set.

Made-for-television movies and mini-series: The budget per television movie is approximately \$2 million and mini-series budgets can easily triple that figure. California has been hosting slightly less than 40 percent of all television movie production.

Episodic television: There are approximately 16 one-hour dramatic series that shoot on the streets of southern California and other California communities. This kind of production seldom ventures far from its California base because of tight shooting schedules and budgets, and has an average shooting budget per episode of \$1 - \$1.5 million.

Commercials: The commercial production industry is worth \$1.5 billion nationally, and California captures 9 percent of that total. The average commercial costs \$95,000 to film and is often shot in one day. Commercial schedules and budgets are much tighter than features or television.

Most location decisions are based upon:

Appearance: Does the location closely match the requirements of the script?

Local cooperation: Time is critical for any production company. Companies need quick, solid decisions made by local officials in order to stay on schedule. Consider the following: Can all of the activities called for in the script (e.g., stunt sequences) be accomplished with the full cooperation of local officials? Is the business community receptive to the use of its business district? Are neighborhoods tolerant of the minor inconveniences filming may bring?)

Cost: Is the cost of renting the location too high for the budget? Are accommodations, restaurants, prop and equipment rental and labor too expensive?

Accessibility: Is the site close to a major highway? What is the travel time from Los Angeles?

In short, film development is a regional strategy for communities interested in attracting motion picture production.

THE CALIFORNIA FILM COMMISSION

The California Film Office was established within the Department of Commerce in January 1985 to attract and promote film production in California. In May, 1987, it was renamed the California Film Commission (CFC) and is assisted by a 26-member Board of Commissioners.

OBJECTIVES

The California Film Commission is focusing on two areas: The reawakening of communities statewide to the benefits of filming in their area; and the reintroduction of the film industry to the beauty, diversity and simplicity of shooting in California.

PROGRAMS

Locations: The CFC has a constantly expanding Location Resource Library which includes over 90,000 catalogued photographs as well as volumes of material on locations and services statewide. The office handles approximately 125 requests daily.

Permits: Filming on state owned and operated property is coordinated through the CFC. The State has eliminated all use fees and can turn around a permit in 24 hours or less. The CFC will issue nearly 1,000 permits this year.

Community Development: The CFC is pleased to have the assistance of over 50 liaisons statewide representing individual city and county efforts to attract filmmaking. This group is called FLICS (Film Liaisons in California, Statewide): Helping communities design their film development strategies and strengthening existing programs increases the outreach and effectiveness of the CFC.

Marketing and Promotion: The CFC has developed the Scouting Handbook that documents locations statewide as well as highlights of some of California's lesser known sites. The staff regularly addresses film industry meetings, trade associations, chambers of commerce and other groups. Advertising, familiarization trips, direct mail and other activities are ongoing.

Ombudsmanship: The CFC acts as a "red-tape cutter" for production problems on the local level and as an intermediary for communities in their dealings with film companies. The office fields 15-20 "assists" per week from production companies, local government and the private sector.

CITY OF TAFT FILM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

The primary purpose for attracting film development in the community is to increase local revenues, provide temporary jobs and increase the use of local services and supplies. Secondary goals include strengthening local business and increasing exposure which may encourage other industries such as tourism to invest in local development.

Community film development can:

- * Provide temporary employment for local residents
- * Generate local revenue
- * Bolster local business
- * Increase use of otherwise unused facilities.

2. COORDINATION EFFORTS

The City of Taft and the Taft District Chamber of Commerce strive to develop good working relationships with key people within the film industry. The City Manager may appoint a key person within City Hall to coordinate film activities within the City limits.

The key person would:

- * Respond to location requests from the film industry or the California Film Commission.
- * Serve as film coordinator when film production is in the Taft area. This includes coordinating film permits, accommodations and production services. The key person should be aware of any previous film production within the community and remain sensitive to local citizens' concerns.

3. FILM PROCEDURES

- A. Advance Notice for Approval:** An applicant will be required to submit a permit request at least one working day prior to the date on which such person desires to conduct an activity for which a permit is required. If such activity interferes with traffic or involves potential public safety hazards, an application may be required at least three working days in advance. To assist the City in providing smooth operations, as much advance notice as possible is recommended.
- B. Clean Up:** The permittee shall conduct operations in an orderly fashion with continuous attention to the storage of equipment not in use and the cleanup of trash and debris.

- C. Filming on Private Property:** An applicant is required to obtain the property owner's permission, consent, and/or lease for use of property not owned or controlled by the city.
- D. Flood Control:** When filming in a flood control channel, an applicant must vacate the channel when the permit indicates because of water releases. Please note that when filming in or on flood control properties, the agency must be named as an additional insured.
- E. Public Works Department (Roads and Streets):** If the applicant must park equipment, trucks, and/or cars in zones that will not permit it, temporary "No Parking" signs must be posted by the city. The applicant must also obtain permission to string cable across sidewalks, or from generator to service point. If it is necessary to close a street, City Council approval by resolution must first be obtained in accordance with California Vehicle Code Section 21101(e).
- F. Traffic Control:** For filming that would impair traffic flow, an applicant must use Taft Police Department enforcement personnel and comply with all traffic control requirements deemed necessary. In adjoining county areas, an applicant must use the California Highway Patrol.
1. An applicant shall furnish and install advance warning signs and any other traffic control devices in conformance with the *Manual of Traffic Controls, State of California, Department of Transportation*. All appropriate safety precautions must be taken.
 2. Traffic may be restricted to one 12-foot lane of traffic and/or stopped intermittently. The period of time that traffic may be restricted will be determined by the city, based on location.
 3. Traffic shall not be detoured across a double line without prior approval of the appropriate department representative.
 4. Unless authorized by the city, the camera cars must be driven in the direction of traffic and must observe all traffic laws.
 5. Any emergency road work or construction by city or county crews and/or private contractors, under permit or contract to the appropriate department, shall have priority over filming activities.

- G. Parking Lots:** When parking in a parking lot, an applicant may be billed according to the current rate schedule established by the city.

4. PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE

When a company decides to film within the City of Taft, the City of Taft and/or the Taft District Chamber of Commerce will endeavor to:

- * Confirm the company's credibility through the California Film Commission.
- * Provide the company with information about accommodations and support services.

The City of Taft shall:

- * Require the company to produce a certificate of insurance naming the city as additional insured to cover liability. (A sample insurance certificate is included with the Filming Permit/Application.)
- * Coordinate the issuance of required city, public works, fire and law enforcement permits. Offer police support during filming to insure that public safety concerns are addressed.

While the company is filming, every effort will be made to assure that the community is informed of the company's progress prior to, during and after actual shooting. Constant contact with businesses involved in filming will allow for accommodation of last minute changes made in the shooting schedule. The City of Taft will both encourage the community to be sensitive to production delays and ensure the company is adhering to its agreements.

HARMLESS AGREEMENT

Permittee waives all claims against City, its officers, agents, employees and volunteers, for loss or damage caused by, arising out of or in any way connected with the exercise of this permit and permittee agrees to hold harmless, indemnify and defend City, its officers, agents, employees and volunteers, from any and all loss, damage or liability which may be suffered or incurred by City, its officers, agents, employees and volunteers caused by, arising out of or in any way connected with exercise by permittee of the rights hereby permitted, except those arising out of the sole negligence of City.

City shall have the privilege of inspecting the premises covered by this permit at any or all times.

This permit shall not be assigned.

City may terminate this permit at any time if permittee fails to perform any covenant herein contained at the time and in the manner herein provided. City agrees it will not unreasonably exercise this right of termination.

The parties hereto agree that the permittee, its officers, agents and employees, in the performance of this permit shall act in an independent capacity and not as officers, employees or agents of the City.

No alteration or variation of the terms of this permit shall be valid unless made in writing and signed by the parties hereto.

Permittee will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, age, national origin or physical handicap.

Permittee agrees to comply with the terms and conditions contained in the attached Filming Ordinance, Filming Permit/Application and any other special requirements deemed necessary by the City.

The permittee hereby agrees to comply with all the rules and regulations of the facility or institution subject to this permit.

Permit must be kept on site at all times.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date