

**Guidelines  
for  
Filming in  
Mineral Wells,  
Texas**

## Guidelines for Filming in Mineral Wells, TX

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## **Guidelines for Filming in Mineral Wells, Texas**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The Guidelines contained in this policy are intended to create a program for promoting economic development activity within Mineral Wells, Texas and the vicinity of the City. The following Guidelines are also intended to protect the personal and property rights of Mineral Wells, Texas residents and businesses, and to promote the public health, safety and welfare. The City Manager reserves the right to impose additional regulations in the interest of public health, safety and welfare, or if otherwise deemed appropriate by the City Manager.

These Guidelines cover requests for commercial use of City-owned property (including but not limited to streets, rights-of-way, parks, and/or public buildings), commercial use of private property which may affect adjacent public or private property, and the use of City equipment and personnel in all types of motion picture productions, including, but not limited to, feature films, television programs, commercials, music videos and corporate films.

### **II. CITY CONTROL/CITY MANAGER AUTHORITY**

The City Manager may authorize the use of any street, right-of-way, park, or public building, equipment or personnel for commercial uses in the filming or taping of movies, television programs, commercials, or training films, and related activities. In conjunction with these uses, the City Manager may require that any or all of the conditions and/or remuneration herein and as specified on the application be met as a prerequisite to that use.

The Applicant agrees that the City of Mineral Wells shall have exclusive authority to grant the Applicant the use of public streets, rights-of-way, parks and public buildings of the City, as well as authority to regulate the hours of production and the general location of the production. The City reserves the full and absolute right to prohibit all filming or to order cessation of filming in order to promote the public health, safety or welfare.

The Applicant shall allow City departments (e.g., Police, Fire, Building) to inspect all structures, property, devices and equipment to be used in connection with the filming and taping, as deemed appropriate by the City Manager.

### **III. PERMIT REQUIREMENTS**

Before filing an application for filming in Mineral Wells, the Office of the City Manager must be contacted to discuss the production's specific filming requirements and the feasibility of filming in Mineral Wells, TX.

Any commercial producer who desires to undertake a commercial production in Mineral Wells is required to complete and return the attached application for filming to the Office of the City Manager, within the time frames below:

- **Commercials or episodic television:** a minimum of five (5) business days prior to the commencement of filming or any substantial activity related to the project.
- **Feature films:** a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the commencement of filming or any substantial activity related to the project.

Applicant shall identify the nature of the production involved, to include the nature of the subject matter and/or content. If requested, Applicant shall provide a copy of the script or other content related materials.

#### **IV. APPLICATION FEE**

An application processing fee of \$25.00 should accompany each application for filming in Mineral Wells.

The City Manager may waive this fee upon proof of an organization's non-profit status or for any other reason deemed appropriate by the City Manager.

#### **V. USE OF CITY EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL**

The Applicant shall pay for all costs of any Police, Fire, Public Works, or other City personnel assigned to the project (whether or not specifically requested by the production) at a rate commensurate with existing City policy. Remuneration rates for the use of any City equipment, including police cars and fire equipment, will be established on a case-by-case basis as determined by the City Manager. The Applicant shall pay all costs in full within ten (10) days after receipt of an invoice for said costs. The City Manager may, at his/her discretion, require an advance deposit for all costs related to City personnel and/or the use of City Equipment.

The City Manager, in consultation with the Chief of Police and/or Fire Chief, shall have the authority to stipulate additional fire or police requirements and level of staffing for same, at any time during a film project if it is determined to be in the best interest of public health, safety and welfare, which cost shall be borne entirely by the Applicant.

#### **VI. USE OF CITY-OWNED REAL ESTATE**

The City Manager may authorize the use of any street, right-of-way, park or public building, use of Mineral Wells, Texas name, trademark or logo and/or use of City equipment and/or personnel for commercial uses in motion picture production. In conjunction with these uses, the City Manager may require that any or all of the conditions and/or remuneration as specified herein and on the application be met as the prerequisite to that use. A security or damage deposit may be required within the discretion of the City Manager.

The Applicant shall reimburse the City for inconveniences when using public property. Following is the rate schedule:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Cost per calendar day</u>
Total or disruptive use (regular operating hours) of a public building, park, right-of-way, or public area	\$500
Partial, non-disruptive use of a public building, park, right-of-way, or public area	\$250
Total closure or obstruction of public street or right-of-way, including parking lots and on-street parking.	\$50
Partial closure or obstruction of public street or right-of-way, including parking lots and on-street parking	\$25
Use of City parking lots, parking areas, and City streets (for the purpose of parking film trailers, buses, catering trucks, and other large vehicles)	\$50

The Applicant acknowledges and agrees that the City of Mineral Wells, Texas, possesses and retains exclusive authority to grant the Applicant a revocable license for the use of its name, trademark, and logo, public streets, rights-of-way, parks and buildings of the City as well as control over the hours of production and the general location of the production. The City reserves the full and absolute right to prohibit all filming or to order cessation of filming activity in order to promote the public health, safety and/or welfare.

#### **VII. VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT**

The Applicant shall provide a report listing the number of vehicles and types of equipment to be used during the filming, including proposed hours of use and proposed parking locations. Such locations will need to be specifically approved by the City Manager. On-street parking or use of public parking lots is subject to City approval.

The use of exterior lighting, power generators, or any other noise- or light-producing equipment requires on-site approval of the City Manager.

#### **VIII. HOURS OF FILMING**

Unless express written permission has been obtained from the City Manager in advance, and affected property owners, tenants and residents have been notified, filming will be limited to the following hours:

Monday through Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday and holidays: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**IX. NOTIFICATION OF NEIGHBORS**

The Applicant shall provide a short written description, approved by the City Manager, of the schedule for the proposed production to the owners, tenants, and residents of each property in the affected neighborhood(s). The Applicant, or his or her designee, shall make a good faith effort to notify each owner, tenant and resident of all such property, and shall submit, as part of this application, a report noting owners, tenants and/or residents' comments, along with their signatures, addresses and phone numbers. Based upon this community feedback, and other appropriate factors considered by the City Manager, the City Manager may grant or deny the filming application.

**X. CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE**

The Applicant shall attach a valid certificate of insurance, issued by a company authorized to conduct business in the state of Texas, naming the City of Mineral Wells and its agents, officers, elected officials, employees and assigns, as additional insured, in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 general liability, including bodily injury and property damage with a \$5,000,000 umbrella; and automobile liability (if applicable) in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 including bodily injury and property damage.

**XI. DAMAGE TO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROPERTY**

The Applicant shall pay in full, within ten (10) days of receipt of an invoice, the costs of repair for any and all damage to public or private property, resulting from or in connection with, the production, and restore the property to its original condition prior to the production, or to better than original condition.

**XII. APPROVAL BY CITY/CITY MANAGER**

Notwithstanding any of the above stated provisions, the City/City Manager reserves the right to grant exceptions, modify or add/delete any requirements as the City/City Manager may, in its sole discretion, deem appropriate.

**XIII. HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

The Applicant shall sign the following Hold Harmless Agreement holding the City harmless from any claim that may arise from their use of designated public property, right-of-way; personnel or equipment in conjunction with the permitted use:

*I certify that I represent the firm which will be performing the filming/taping at the locations specified on the attached permit application. I further certify that I and my firm will perform in accordance with the directions and specifications of The City of Mineral Wells, Texas, and that I and my firm will indemnify and hold harmless the City of Mineral Wells, Texas and its elected officials, officers, servants, employees, successors, agents, departments and assigns from any and all losses, damages, expense, costs and/or claims of every nature and kind arising out of or in connection with the filming/taping and other related activities engaged in pursuant to this Application.*

*I further certify that the information provided on this Application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I possess the authority to sign this and other contracts and agreements with the City of Mineral Wells, Texas on behalf of the firm.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE CITY OF MINERAL WELLS, TX

Application for Commercial Filming

Title of project and subject matter

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Type of production (feature film, television production, commercial, corporate, music video, etc.)

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Proposed Filming Locations (attach additional pages if necessary)

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Date(s) of prep/filming

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Primary Contact

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Manager (if different from Primary Contact)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Production Company Information

Name of Production Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact's Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact's Email: \_\_\_\_\_



Is this production already in contact with the Texas Film Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, who is your contact at the Texas Film Commission?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRODUCTION** (*Attach additional sheets if necessary.*)

1. Production schedule and activities, including stunts, pyrotechnics, special effects, aerial photography, amplified sound or use of animals: (Give dates and times and rain dates. Hours should include set-up, holding of sets and restoration.)
  
2. Approximate number of persons involved with the production, including cast and crew:
  
3. Anticipated need of City personnel, equipment or property:
  
4. Public areas in which public access will be restricted during production:
  
5. Describe alterations to public property:
  
6. Number and type of production vehicles to be used and location(s) where vehicles will be parked:
  
7. Location where crew will be fed, if not at filming location:
  
8. Location where extras will be held, if not at filming location:
  
9. Please attach map of anticipated street closure(s) or other public area use.

Applicant (production company representative):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

Application approved by Mineral Wells representative:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The "Guidelines for Filming in Mineral Wells, Texas" apply to all motion picture production in Mineral Wells.*

*The Office of the City Manager may require the applicant to acknowledge receipt of the Guidelines prior to approving this application.*

## Sample Location Agreement

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*Working Title of Motion Picture*

*Date*

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*Set Name*

*Scene Numbers*

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*Name (herein called "Licensor")*

*Phone Number*

*Business Address*

hereby grants to

[insert name and address of Production Company]

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\_\_\_\_\_, (herein called "Company"), and its employees, agents, independent producers, contractors and suppliers, permission to enter upon and use the premises located at:

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and all signs, fixtures, and other personal and real property on and around said premises (all of which, together with said premises, shall be referred to herein as the "Property") for the purpose of still photography and making motion pictures, videotapes and sound recordings in connection with the production, exhibition, advertising and exploitation of the motion picture, commencing on or about \_\_\_\_\_, (subject to change on account of weather conditions or changes in production schedule), and continuing until completion of all scenes and work required.

### CHARGES:

All charges are payable on completion of all work contemplated, unless specifically agreed to the contrary. Company is not obligated to actually use the Property or produce any motion picture or include material photographed or recorded hereunder in the motion picture. Company may at any time elect not to use the Property by giving Licensor written notice of such election, in which case neither party shall have any obligation hereunder.

Company may place all necessary facilities and equipment, including temporary sets, and may park vehicles if appropriate, on the Property, and agrees to remove same after completion of work and leave the Property in as good condition as when received, reasonable wear and tear from uses permitted herein excepted. Signs on the Property may, but need not, be removed or changed, but, if removed or changed, must be replaced. Licensor agrees to execute a location restoration release in Company's favor upon Company's reasonable request following restoration of the Property. In connection with the motion picture, Company may refer to the Property or any part thereof by any actual or fictitious name and may attribute any real or fictitious events as occurring on the Property. Licensor irrevocably grants to Company and Company's successors and assigns the right, in perpetuity, throughout the universe, to duplicate and re-create all or a portion of the Property, to alter such duplicates and re-creations, and to use such duplicates and re-creations in any media and/or manner now known or hereafter devised in connection with the motion picture, including without limitation sequels thereto, merchandising, theme parks and studio tours, and in connection with publicity, promotion and/or advertising for any or all of the foregoing.

# PRODUCTION COMPANY LETTERHEAD

## SAMPLE #1: MERCHANTS AND BUSINESS DISTRICT

June 14, 2018

Dear Neighbor:

My name is Joe Smith and I am a Location Scout for the upcoming movie, "THE MOVIE." Shooting will be taking place in Mineral Wells beginning in August 2018 and continuing through November 2018.

Some of our filming locations are in your building's area, and we wanted to inform you of our upcoming presence beginning Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. On this day as well as Monday, August 13<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> we will be filming outside the Turks Head Building. Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> we will be filming on Washington Street between SE 1<sup>st</sup> St and SE 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. We are going to need to close down many of the surrounding streets, as well as posting "No Parking" signs with the help of the City of Mineral Wells. We are going to have multiple Mineral Wells Police Officers on hand to help direct traffic and ensure public safety.

We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause, but thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me on my cell phone at 123-555-6789, or my colleague Emily Jones at 321-555-9876.

Thank you,

Joe Smith

Location Scout

# PRODUCTION COMPANY LETTERHEAD

## SAMPLE #2: RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

September 3, 2018

Dear Waterman Street Neighbor:

We are presently filming the television show "TeeVee Show" in Mineral Wells. One of our recurring locations is in your neighborhood and we wanted to inform you of our upcoming presence.

On Thursday, October 18, 2018 we will be filming a few scenes on Waterman Street that will require us to clear the street, as well as intermittently close the street down throughout the day. We are currently working on alternative parking nearby for those that we will be affecting the most and thank you in advance for your patience with that.

We understand that this may be an inconvenience to your everyday activities, but we ask for your cooperation during the filming of our show. Without the support of the residents of Mineral Wells, it would not be possible for us to film locally. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at 321-555-9876 or send an e-mail to [tvproductions@tvshow.com](mailto:tvproductions@tvshow.com).

Thank you,

The Locations Department

TeeVee Show Productions

# PRODUCTION COMPANY LETTERHEAD

## SAMPLE #3: RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD, PRODUCTION TRUCK PARKING

September 3, 2018

Dear Hope Street Neighbor:

We are presently filming the television show "TeeVee Show" in Mineral Wells. One of our recurring locations is in your neighborhood and we wanted to inform you of our upcoming presence.

On Tuesday, November 13, 2018 we will be filming a few scenes on nearby Governor Street that will require us to clear that street, as well as intermittently close it down throughout the day while filming. We will also need to park some of our production trucks and vehicles on Hope Street. We are currently working on alternative parking nearby for those that we will be affecting the most and thank you in advance for your patience with that.

We understand that this may be an inconvenience to your everyday activities, but we ask for your cooperation during filming. Without the support of the residents of Mineral Wells, it would not be possible for us to shoot locally. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at 321-555-9876 or send an e-mail to [tvproductions@tvshow.com](mailto:tvproductions@tvshow.com).

Thank you,

The Locations Department

TeeVee Show Productions

Mineral Wells, TX

Notification of Proposed Filming and Signoff Request

Mineral Wells, TX requires that all property owners/residents whose property is adjacent to the area sought to be closed must be notified and provided with a map of the area, which indicates all obstructions to be placed in the closure area. The notification must indicate by signature, whether the property owner/resident approves or disapproves of the proposed closure.

For additional information concerning the actual filming at this location, please contact:

\_\_\_\_\_
(Film Company's Contact Name) (Phone Number)

\_\_\_\_\_ is applying for a FILMING PERMIT for the following film:

(Company Name)
\_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Film)
\_\_\_\_\_

The filming is scheduled for the following dates and times: \_\_\_\_\_

The filming will close or partially close the following streets: \_\_\_\_\_

The filming will consist of the following: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY OWNER/RESIDENT
Please fill out this section completely as this information is used by Mineral Wells, TX to determine whether or not the filming activities indicated above will be approved or denied.
O APPROVE O DISAPPROVE RECEIVED MAP: O YES O NO
(Print Name and Title) (Signature)
(Print Address) (Phone Number)
O RESIDENCE O BUSINESS (Choose One)
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Block Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by Mineral Wells, TX on: \_\_\_\_\_



## ABOUT US

The Texas Film Commission is your first stop for resources that serve the film, television, commercial, animation, visual effects and video game industries of Texas. Serving the public since 1971, the Texas Film Commission supports our state's global position as a premier production destination across all media industries. If you want to produce your next project in Texas, our industry-savvy staff is ready to connect you to Texas' diverse locations, experienced workforce, support services, industry organizations and competitive production incentive program.

## LOCATIONS

Texas is known for its diverse range of locations and has been lensed as the American Midwest, Manhattan, California, Europe, Mexico, New England and more. From modern urban settings and charming main streets to coastal beaches, swamps, forests and deserts, Texas has perfect, camera-ready locations for your next project. Our established infrastructure of vendors and production facilities can support projects of all sizes and budget levels.

The Texas Film Commission houses an extensive location library with photographs from thousands of sites statewide. Our production team can create customized location packages for filmmakers with first-rate turnaround times.

## CREW RESOURCES

To serve the specialized needs of the media production industries, the Texas Production Directory provides filmmakers with the widest range of crew persons and support services available in the state while offering free listings for Texas-based crew members and vendors. Visit our website to search for crew and services or to create a listing. The Job Hotline section of our website is also a great tool for listing and finding current cast and crew calls for projects filming in Texas.

## GAME INDUSTRY

Texas is one of the leading states in the nation for video game development, as measured by job numbers. The Film Commission serves as the state's liaison to the video game industry, working with educational institutions, technical and creative talent, and industry leaders to make Texas the first choice for expansion and new business.

## PROGRAMS

### FILM-FRIENDLY TEXAS COMMUNITIES

Our extensive network of film-friendly communities connects filmmakers with production-savvy representatives in towns and cities statewide. From permits to vendors, these communities are ready to assist your productions and connect you with the resources available in their area.

### WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAM

Texas' moving image industry is growing and so is our workforce. The Workforce Training Program, in partnership with local non-profits and community colleges, features focused and intensive workshops taught by industry professionals that provide training for our most in-demand entry-level positions and career advancement.

### TEXAS FILM ROUND-UP

#### (TEXAS MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVE PROGRAM)

Administered by the Texas Archive of the Moving Image, this award-winning service celebrates the history of Texas and its film production heritage by preserving Texas-related moving images and making them available to the public and educators around the world.

Visit [www.texasarchive.org](http://www.texasarchive.org) for more information.

### TEXAS FILM TRAILS

The Texas Film Trails is a curated series of self-guided tours to recognize the communities that have supported Texas' place in filmmaking history. The tours will give you a chance to explore and experience destinations that have been seen through the lens of celebrated Texas films.

## INCENTIVES

The Texas Moving Image Industry Incentive Program provides 5-20% cash grants on qualified Texas spending of approved projects. An additional incentive of 2.5% is possible if 25% of production days are completed in an economically distressed or underutilized area of Texas.

Combined with up-front savings from sales tax exemptions, waiver of the state occupancy tax on hotel rooms, refunds on off-road fuel tax, experienced local crews, production related vendors and infrastructure, Texas competes for your business and provides projects with direct savings to their bottom line.

FILM ★ TELEVISION ★ COMMERCIAL ★ ANIMATION ★ VFX ★ GAME

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM ★ [WWW.TEXASFILMCOMMISSION.COM](http://WWW.TEXASFILMCOMMISSION.COM)





# Opening the Door to On-Location Filming



## **Opening the Door to On-Location Filming**

The Texas Film Commission provides information to communities on how to effectively handle on-location filming, for film projects large or small. We want you to know what's involved, from the first phone call all the way through to the wrap. Whether a Hollywood blockbuster or magazine photo shoot, the Texas Film Commission wants to be your partner in the process, and your primary resource for support and information. We are always ready to help you through all the various stages of production request and the realities of filmmaking.

Texas has a long history of film production, dating back to the early 1900s. For many years production in our state was movies and later on television. With rapid advancements in technology, access to filmmaking tools has evolved and now film production is an umbrella term for media production across a variety of mediums. In this document, we'll use "film" or "production" to refer to any kind of motion picture production: feature films, independent short films, television programs, television commercials, reality show segments, music videos, webisodes—they are all production.

On-location filming can be good business for your community, and for Texas overall. Locally, a film spends money on a wide range of things, from lumber to groceries to gas to hotel rooms to furniture rentals. While there's never any guarantee that tourism will increase as the result of a popular production, it certainly has happened. Statewide, every film made in Texas makes it better for the ones to follow, by increasing our state's capacity for production, creating more jobs and making it easier for companies to invest in the infrastructure keeps us competitive with other states.

This and the following documents are designed to help and prepare you for how to best handle requests when you are approached by filmmakers interested in your community. For every community, there's value in having a realistic view of what's involved in working with filmmakers. And part of being ready is having film guidelines already in place, recognizing the needs of the production industry while protecting the interests of your hometown.

In attracting film business to Texas, the Texas Film Commission promotes statewide locations; trained technical crews; specialized film vendors and support services; the Texas Motion Picture Industry Incentive Program, offering cash-back incentives to filmmakers; and, certainly not least, Texas hospitality. It's all about bringing jobs and spending to Texas. That's the big picture; the actual experience happens in the neighborhoods and streets of Texas communities.

Texas' larger cities have long-standing, full-time film commissions carrying the flag, and we want every community in Texas to also have immediate access to information and support. It's important to us to include you in sharing what we've learned in 43 years of location research and filming. Above all, we want every community to have a positive experience during filming, and to look forward to the next film.

Rather than trying to cover every possibility in an exhaustive film policy, it's better for a community to set up guidelines and then consider each request on a case-by-case basis. With your participation, we hope to create an environment in which the filmmakers and the municipality have a good experience. The mantra should be, Be Flexible. Every film has a different set of needs than every other film, and off-the-wall requests can be the norm, not the exception.

You might hear a filming request that seems unreasonable. It might indeed *be* unreasonable. The answer doesn't always have to be an unqualified yes; there's almost always room for negotiation. Liken this to dealing with a teenager: they want everything, but with a bit of structure already in place, they can see that they can make accommodations to let you feel comfortable about saying yes. And that's the answer we all want.

On the other hand, are they asking to shut down Main Street with 30 minutes' notice? Or use pyrotechnics inside the historic county courthouse? Sometimes the answer is just no.

This introduction should give every community the tools to work with on-location filming. With this training, you'll be ready for the easy requests, and ready to find solutions to the more complicated ones. All parties will know what they need from each other to get the work started. Meanwhile, on our part, we will work to make it easy for filmmakers to find you.



### **The Scouting Process: Where It All Starts**

While our office provides assistance with projects in all phases of production—from development to wrap—we most commonly provide location assistance when they are in the preliminary phase of deciding where to go. Typically, a film project hires a freelance location scout to research locations in different communities. (The word “scout” can refer to the person doing the scouting, or to the location scouting trip itself, as in, “We saw that on last week’s scout.”) Usually, a scout visits your community and takes photos of sites that are likely matches for what they need. It’s not always the beauty spots, either—the project may call for high-end homes or it may need shabby motels. In this initial research stage, a scout may not reach out to City representatives. They will look around, shoot a ton of photos and move on.

For larger productions, the Texas Film Commission may facilitate a scout where we will contact community representatives for a certain region to get leads on locations. If we do not have any current coverage of specific locations, we will ask for assistance

To help explain why scouts act like stealth photographers, it helps to understand their process. They’re hired on a day-to-day basis, always specific to a single production. They’re given a long laundry list of things to find as quickly as possible, and the industry measure for a successful job is to provide the producer with plenty of choices. (Not two farmhouses; ten. Not one Main Street; seven.) So a scout has to move quickly, stay on course and allow time to edit the photos for presentation on a daily basis. Every phone call or meeting keeps them from providing more choices. You will hear from them if they decide to move forward or need leads on additional options for locations in the area, but at this point a formal meeting should not be expected.

That scout may have contacted the Texas Film Commission for guidance on likely spots, and with proper credentials, we may provide them with an official letter of introduction to carry with them. But, especially if the scout is someone with a lot of local knowledge, they don't contact us – their priority is to photograph as many locations as they can, and to get a wide variety of choices into the hands of the producers. So don't take offense if you don't hear about the scout until after the fact. It's unrealistic to require – or even to expect – that location scouts make themselves known to city representatives. That would be time-consuming and impossible to enforce. Please don't take personally; just understand that that's how the business works, and hope they find something that will call for a closer look, with a production team in tow when they return.

A business or homeowner that has been contacted by a location scout may call you at the city to learn more about the project. If you don't know anything about it, there's a quick way to find out. You – or the property owner – can give the Film Commission a call to check up on the project. On most legitimate projects, we'll have a quick answer.

### **How The Decision Is Made**

The producers will review the scout's photos. Some communities won't make the first cut. For others, though, the producers will want to learn more, to see if that site will work for the film. They will contact the city, perhaps asking for your help to access building interiors, recommend similar sites and so forth. But remember, at this point it's still research, and your town is not their only choice, so keep it quiet and low-key. There's nothing to be gained by stirring up local expectations at this point.

The next step is an in-person visit from the production company, usually by the production designer and/or art director (responsible for the overall visual look of the film; the location scout or location manager; the producer(s); and/or the director. At this point, they're considering the scene they need to shoot at that location, and what they're going to need to make it happen.

They'll research several locations, but please remember this: most locations that are scouted are not used. Even so, those that aren't used for this film may prove valuable to the next production, even years later. Scouting provides good information for filmmakers and for the Texas Film Commission. (And asking a scout to share the photos with you is reasonable, and a great way to enhance your own photo library for future use.)

If they like what they see, the next time you see them may be on the "tech scout." This is when some of the department heads (camera department, art department, location department) come for an in-person look at how the logistics will be handled at that location. Hosting a tech scout is great news, because that means they're very close to choosing your community.

Even a simple scene – a person raking leaves in a yard with a picket fence – can require swarms of crew members, lots of trucks, traffic control, huge lights, etc. And sometimes a scene is far from simple – stunts, explosions, crowds – so it's going to take considerably more time, planning and city involvement.

Having knowledge of this process will let producers can see that you're working with an understanding of their business, and that your town is offering a filming application process without surprises. They appreciate being able to quickly determine whether your town can effectively work with them to make the night shoots happen, or to close a road. Almost anything is possible, given a reasonable timeline and the right application process.

### **Prep**

They've chosen your town. Once that decision has been made, that's when plans are made, sets are built, and so begins the process of working out the details. You already know the benefits of working with film, but you need to also be ready for the many, many details that come with it. We hope our regional partners will view all that activity as a good thing. Cooperation can't be legislated, but we hope to encourage you to look at film requests with a can-do, problem-solving attitude. On some very tricky production problems in the past, the solutions have come not from the filmmakers, but from local expertise. Next time, it might be you that saves the day.

Don't be afraid to ask obvious questions. If they're planning on 200 extras, it's okay to ask where those 200 people are eating and where they're going to the bathroom. And where's all that trash going?

Internal production demands such as budget and schedule force the production team to make constant revisions, so you'll see plans evolve, grow, shrink, or disappear completely. Though it may seem that these guys have no clue what they're doing or when they're doing it, that's not (usually!) the case. Every single day of filming involves 75 or a hundred variables, plus a Plan B. Is the permit in place? Can the filmmakers work around the hours of a busy restaurant? Did the Scottish actor's visa arrive in time? Is that a thunderstorm headed this way? These variables are a part of every working day, so it helps if the city representatives understand what the production company is up against.



### **Different Types Of Productions**

To know what to expect from film requests, it helps to know a bit about the most common types of film and television projects, and the impacts of each. Depending on which type of production you're dealing with, you'll see some very different timelines and requirements. But here come those variables again! Any project, regardless of budget or schedule, could require extra care in dealing with stunts, special effects, aerial photography, crowd scenes or exotic animals.

As you'll see in the section about writing film guidelines, we encourage you to consider setting your permit fees on a sliding scale based on impact.

### **Commercials and Music Videos**

Generally the lifespan of the production of a commercial or music video is two weeks. Within one week, they scout, choose locations and handle all the prep: location agreements, city permits and all the rest. The shoot and wrap take up the second week. Some have hefty budgets, even higher than that of a low-budget feature film. Low-budget commercials and music videos, even if they're filming entirely on private property, are still likely to have some impact on parking, streets and sidewalks.

Commercial production is by far the most active part of Texas' production industry business. In fact, you're much more likely to get inquiries from commercials than from any other segment of the industry.

### **Episodic Television**

An episodic television series, such as FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS, operated under a very specialized schedule. Typically, they were producing 10 - 20 episodes (a full season) over about nine months. Each weekly episode requires two weeks of prep, followed by one week of shooting. So there's always one crew shooting the episode, while the other crew is prepping for the following episodes.

Episodic scripts are being written as the season progresses, so the production team often hasn't seen the script (and its list of locations) until very shortly before prep. There's very little time for location scouting; further, the script might call for them to go back to a location they've used before (a "recurring location").

Both of these short formats operate on very fast timelines. Though they can sometimes arrange for a bit more prep time for a complicated scene, their biggest hurdle is always lack of time. If you'd like to make your welcome clear, consider instituting a process to handle permit requests within a 48-hour turnaround. Every episodic producer will be awed by your foresight.

Episodic production can be well worth a community's efforts, especially with recurring locations bringing the production team to town again and again. However, recurring locations can present problems too, as the production team uses the same location intermittently, perhaps for months. The production-to-community dynamic changes after a production has been there repeatedly, bringing more work for the film liaison. Special efforts must be made to keep the neighborhood happy.

### **Feature Films**

A general rule for feature production is two weeks of prep for every week of production. So a six-week shoot should mean three months of prep, all to be completed before filming begins. All too often, though, the prep period gets condensed into a matter of a few days per week.

Features are generally more complicated than the other types of production, with higher impact on the community, both economic (lots of spending) and in terms of disruption (lots of activity). A feature brings more equipment and more people, works longer hours, needs more streets and parking, and overall has a bigger footprint than any other type of production. For community representatives, dealing with features simply takes more time than with smaller, faster projects. It's an intense but fascinating process, and the Texas Film Commission is always ready to help.

### **Reality Television Segments**

These crews are usually self-contained with small crews, a few vehicles and minimal gear. For something like a restaurant profile on a Hometown visit on THE BACHELOR, they will bring their crew and equipment and maybe film for a few days. They will likely not have on-set catering and make runs to area restaurants for lunch. If filming at one or two locations on private properties, the city is likely to see minimal impact. Neighbor notifications are still important, as there may be a number of vehicles like passenger vans parked on neighborhood streets.





## The Shoot

Up until this point, it's all been "preproduction." Now it's "production," that is, cameras are rolling. With possibly hundreds of people on the payroll, this is the most intense period in filmmaking, when even one day's delay can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. There's always a Plan B, but even so, you're likely to be fielding more than a few last-minute requests as production continues. Some of those requests will be reasonable and easily handled; others, less so. All any filmmaker can expect is that you'll give it your best shot.

We're not trying to scare communities away from on-location filming, but we want you to have a clear-eyed view of what to expect. Especially on big-budget films, the company operates with an almost military precision. Even so, things do go wrong, and when there's a problem, you're the production company's first contact. Your skillfully crafted film guidelines and application form have helped lay everything out in advance, but let's face it: these folks can drive you crazy! Remind yourself that it's temporary, remember all those film dollars pouring into town, and keep your eyes on the prize: the wrap.

## The Wrap

After filming is completed, big productions always keep people on payroll for a few weeks, to make sure that bills are paid, locations are restored, and rentals are returned. Their goal is to put everything back the way it was, or better still, better than it was. Here's a tremendously important role for any film liaison: before the production company wraps and leaves town, make sure you know how to reach them after their local office has closed.

An unpaid bill – which might have been simply overlooked – can be the last impression that a movie leaves with a community, and those unresolved issues can make it very hard for future productions to get an unreserved welcome. A local business might write off not getting compensated for loss of business or an unpaid bill, but they won't forget. Everything went great, but someone didn't get paid as promised... then when the next production comes into town, wham! They're paying for the sins of the last project.

Communication is your most important tool in solving problems that come up after the fact. Your community should know that you're the point person to contacts about any snags. Requests needs to come promptly; if you don't hear about a problem until months after the fact, it can take months more to find a person who can issue a check. Having one local go-to person on the case will go a long way in making sure that everything is left tidy.

### **Where To Start**

Our long-term goal is for Texas to be known as the most proactive community network in the nation. We want to be known as the easiest place for filmmakers to do business, and as a place that requires filmmakers' respect of our people and communities; it's only fair. The attached Warner Bros. Code of Conduct shows how a reputable production group expects their own crews to behave when they come to town.

### **Designate a Film Liaison**

Every community should assess its own capacities to determine the most effective way to deal with filming requests. In some places, the best choice will be the Mayor or City Manager; in others, it could be your economic development liaison in the Chamber of Commerce or the Convention & Visitors Bureau. In every case, it should be a person that can act as a conduit to the rest of the community. That person doesn't have to be employed directly by the municipality, but they need to have a relationship with the entity within the municipality that can give approvals for the requests.

It's a great idea to get the following list ready for those making film inquires, and keep it up-to-date:

- Local Film Liaison
- City Manager/Mayor
- Director of Parks/Recreation (arranging use of parks)
- Director of Public Works (arranging special use of street lights, water, etc.)
- Local/County Law Enforcement Contacts
- Local/County Highway Contacts
- Chamber of Commerce
- County Judge (for arranging permission to use County properties)
- Business, Historic and Neighborhood groups
- Theater groups (for arranging local talent and extras)
- Barricade companies (for traffic control)
- Rental companies (tents, chairs, tables, etc.)
- Hotels, Motels and Bed-and-Breakfasts

### **The Application Form**

The attached filming guideline template has been used many times, with many different kinds of production. You are welcome to work with your city's attorney to make any changes you feel best suit the needs of your community. In six pages, it includes all the guidelines you're likely to need, and a two-page application form. This document lets the production company know what standard restrictions apply, and addresses film-related topics including:

- insurance coverage
- approval processes and timelines
- street closures
- pyrotechnics, special effects, dangerous animals, stunts, aerial photography
- types of production for which permits are required [generally, permits are not required for news and sports programming]
- parking restrictions
- required notifications of neighbors and businesses
- curfews
- noise restrictions
- security/damage deposits for use of city-owned property and equipment
- use of police, fire department, and city employees
- use of city trademarks or logo

### **Dealing with Local Media**

Filming activity will catch the attention of your residents, and in the case of a larger project, may bring people in from the surrounding cities. Every production will have a different approach to community outreach, but bystanders and onlookers vying for attention of the stars can have a negative impact on the production schedule. It is best to contact the Unit Publicist to arrange scheduled set visits or interviews for local press.

### **Safety**

No matter what the size of the project or how minimal the crew may be—even a lone cameraman filming on the shoulder of an isolated road—film production activity presens a safety concern and it is imperative that proper protocol and permit processes are consistently followed. The Texas Film Commission can assist you in connecting filmmakers with the proper entities for filming on roads, railroads and bodies of water.

### **That's a Wrap**

The Texas Film Commission is here for you every step of the way. You are welcome to contact us at any time with any questions or for more guidance.