

# LOGISTICS AND BEST PRACTICES REGARDING FILM AND TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

This document will focus on the best practices and logistics in regards to having film and television productions in your community. It will cover the ins and outs of permitting logistics, as well as overall community support and involvement. The goal is ultimately to create a film-friendly environment in addition to an effective and efficient process of handling productions for the financial benefit of the community and municipality.

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## 1

### WHAT DOES “FILM-FRIENDLY” MEAN?

A community is prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges of accommodating media production and are ready to help match local businesses with production-related needs and services.

- Encourage the use of your community as a location to capture and produce feature film and television content.
- Provide opportunities for local businesses to leverage opportunities linked to the film industry.
- Support film production initiatives that contribute to economic development outcomes linked to the city’s economic development strategy or destination marketing strategic plan.
- Provide clear guidance in relation to the consistent and transparent management of film and television-related requests for support.

## 2

### WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN PRODUCTIONS WANT TO FILM IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Let’s say a production wants to film in your community. This could be anything from filming at a local house or shutting down Main Street for a driving scene. The first person who will reach out will most likely be the Location Scout and Location Manager. These people will be your main point of contact for the production, although you might also talk to the producers and the director as they start to narrow down locations for the shoot.

This is your time to shine and really showcase what you have as a community - not only specific locations, but also a supportive community ready to support film productions in your city or town.

If your office receives a direct inquiry, you should ask certain questions: What is the name of the project? Who are the filmmakers behind it? What is it about? Is it a feature film, television series, commercial or something else? What are the shoot dates and budget?

Some information may not be known in the early stages or would be considered confidential. But by asking such questions you will be able to judge how to approach your community and how much time your office should spend on the request.

Encouraging film production is an economic development tool that can provide jobs for local residents, generate local revenue and bolster local businesses. These productions can be great source of economic activity, tax revenue, jobs and tourism in your local community and Connecticut as a whole.

It is always important to balance the needs of a production company with the concerns of local government and the local community.

Consider establishing permit policies and regulations that are "film-friendly" with the intent to increase or retain filming.

### **Consider the Following "Best Practices" When Creating Film Policies:**

1. Rapid film permit issuance: 2 – 5 business days from permit application submission to permit issuance. Having a fast and simple permit process with one permit application will streamline the process and make the community more welcoming to everyone from student filmmakers to big production companies.
2. Establish standard hours for film activities: typically 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. for residential zones (with the option to extend hours with the approval of affected residents and business owners).
3. Establish reasonable permit fees. Compare fees charged by similar surrounding cities and stay within or below those limits. Some cities/counties reduce or waive permit fees for accredited student or charitable productions (while still requiring a permit) to encourage more filming.
4. Establish and post cost recovery fees for the reimbursement of city or county personnel (i.e., application review, monitors, police, fire, traffic control).
5. Establish a film permit requirement but waive any requirement for a business license, as most film activities are temporary.
6. It is discouraged to require a bond. (Productions must pay additional fees to secure a bond, and the city/county must then rely on the bond company to collect damages from the production company). Instead, a refundable security deposit against damages is preferred.
7. Appoint a key liaison for coordinating permits. Be sure to appoint a back-up liaison. The liaison will be required to make decisions as the community representative prior to and during filming, and should therefore have full endorsement and authority of the local jurisdiction. The liaison should be aware of any previous film production within the community and remain sensitive to local citizens' concerns.
8. Create a centralized filming section on your city/county website clearly listing all film regulations, permit and insurance requirements, fees and liaison contact information.
9. Consider adopting an ordinance that protects the orderly conduct of a permitted film event from persons who interfere.

**Example of Some Specific Guidelines for Filming Regulations:**

1. **Timely Issuance of Film Permits:** An applicant will be required to submit a permit request at least two business days prior to the date of the requested production activity. If such activity interferes with traffic or involves potential public safety hazards, an application may be required at least four business days in advance.
2. **Notification:** All residents and merchants within a 200 feet radius of the film location must receive notice of filming dates, times, location address and production company contact at least 24 hours prior to the first film activity. It is most effective to notify affected residents and business owners in person or via flyer, unless a property is inaccessible.
3. **Parking:** When parking production vehicles on a public street, residents and merchants impacted by the parking must receive notice at least 24 hours prior to the arrival of the vehicles. All those impacted should also be notified of the city/county's procedures for towing vehicles parked in areas where "no parking" signs have been posted.
4. **Cleanup:** 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. The area used shall be cleaned of trash and debris upon completion of filming at the scene and restored to the original condition before leaving the site.
5. **Filming on Private Property:** An applicant is required to obtain the property owner's permission, consent and signed location agreement, in addition to a permit, for use of the property not owned or controlled by the city/county.
6. **Flood Control (if applicable):** When filming in a flood control channel, an applicant must vacate channel when water is released. Please note that when filming in or on flood control properties, the agency must be named as an additional insured.
7. **Public Works Department (Road 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 with approval of the local authority. The applicant must also obtain permission to lay and safely mat cable across sidewalks or from generator to service point.
8. **Traffic Control:** For filming that would impair traffic flow, an applicant must use Highway Patrol, County Sheriff or local law enforcement personnel and comply with all traffic control requirements deemed necessary.
9. **Municipal Parking Lots:** When parking in a municipal parking lot, an applicant may be billed according to the current rate schedule established by the city/county. In order to assure the safety of citizens in the surrounding community, access roads to beaches, which serve as emergency service roads, must never be blocked. No relocation, alteration, or moving of beach structures will be permitted without prior approval.

## INSURANCE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS

Insurance should be required for filming. For example, the applicant/permittee must maintain in force, during the full term of the film permit. Example of insurance amounts and coverages:

A. Commercial General Liability Insurance with limits not less than \$2,000,000 each occurrence Combined Single Limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including coverages for Contractual Liability, Personal Injury, Independent Contractors, Broad form Property Damage, and Products Liability and Completed Operations. If a general aggregate limit applies, either the general aggregate limit shall apply separately to this project/location or the general aggregate limit shall be twice the required occurrence limit;

B. Commercial Automobile Liability Insurance with limits not less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence Combined Single Limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage, including coverages for owned, non-owned and hired automobiles, as applicable; and

C. Workers' Compensation Insurance in statutory amounts with Employer's Liability Coverage with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 each accident.

### What is a certificate of insurance for film or photography?

A certificate of insurance, or COI for short, is proof that you have insurance coverage should the worst happen. It's essentially a list of your production's insurance coverages, as well as the effective dates and limits of each coverage.

Every COI is custom-made, written for a particular "certificate holder" (your rental house, location, etc.), and contains a box at the bottom where your insurance broker can include any specific language that your certificate holder requires.

Beyond coverages, every certificate of insurance contains your company's name and address, your insurance broker's contact information and signature, as well as the name and national identifier number of the insurance company backing your production.

A COI proves that your production, no matter how big or small, has the backing of a licensed insurance broker, as well as large insurance companies ready to step in if something goes wrong.

**Other Considerations to Encourage Filming:**

A city or county that wishes to actively recruit filming as part of its economic development plan should also consider providing the following services or incentives to encourage filming.

1. Provide service and support to each production company from the initial contact to the close of the production, including problem solving on film related matters. Support should include coordination between the production company, local residents and businesses and the city/county.
2. Offer fee-free city/county-owned properties for use as filming locations. Charge applicants for cost recovery only – review time, police, fire or security monitors.
3. Waive permit fees.
4. Provide free vacant office space and / or free parking lots.
5. Create an online database of location photos.

**Additional thoughts that can help**

Being film-friendly includes reasonable guidelines and fees and a community's ability to assist productions with their location needs. Overly-restrictive regulations (i.e., requiring a building permit in order to temporarily attach anything to a building/structure or having to obtain 100% written consent of all affected residents and business owners) will only serve to discourage filming in your community.

While there are jurisdictions that believe filming activities should cause as little impact on residents and businesses as possible, the nature of a film shoot is that it can sometimes be intrusive, even though the impact may be minimal and all good faith efforts are made to mitigate the impact from filming activities. However, there are few concerns that can't be successfully resolved when cities/counties work with production companies to make filming a positive experience for all involved.

**Here are some points that will help build strong support for productions that shoot in your community:**

1. Designate a film liaison for handing productions. It's much easier for productions to scout and film in a community when there is one go-to contact to help from start to finish. Having one person who can troubleshoot, solve problems, and reach out to other municipal departments on your behalf can be a huge advantage.
2. Establishing relationships with all municipal departments can really help in bring more productions and business to the community. These productions will probably need to be in contact with departments that would handle requests for police, fire, parking, street closures and more. These lines of communication can be an important role in becoming a film-friendly community.

3. Film and television shoots typically require the cooperation of other local government officials, such as the police or fire chief, city manager, DOT officials and the parks department. For example, the company may wish to close a street at a certain time, change signage on buildings or bring a large number of extras to a downtown park. Inform these officials that they may receive calls from production companies. Encourage them to be enthusiastic and flexible, and help the company as best they can while still looking after your community's interests. Remember that film and television production is a very expensive, high-pressure business. The easier your local officials can make it on a production company when they are planning the complicated logistics of a shoot, the better!
4. Production companies set up specifically for the shoot are typically formed as LLCs or similar corporations. They are created around the dates of the filming, which can be for several weeks, months or years (such as with a television series) at a time. So while the production might be funded and distributed by a big studio like Netflix or Disney, the temporary company name may be unfamiliar to you. In addition, these companies will typically create code names to put on directional signage pointing to set or base camp when they are on location. This is simply to keep their production schedule as efficient as possible without unsolicited public interference. These are often a yellow sign with a strange name and an arrow pointing somewhere.
5. Location contracts explaining the details of the shoot, the agreed-upon location fee, liability insurance (covered by the studio) and how any damage would be addressed (a rare problem, but covered by the studio) are entered into by the show's location manager and the property owner. If the location isn't public property, or your community does not require a general permit or application, the negotiations are often a private matter and you might not be aware a show is in town.
6. Part of the impact of film production will be felt residents that live in your community. This is an important piece of becoming film-friendly. It is suggested that you hold a community meeting about film production to educate and inform residents of upcoming productions and also hear their concerns. A lot of the times what happens is that the residents just don't understand why there would be ten trucks parked out on the street and there's a lot of commotion, so letting community residents know beforehand is key.
7. Productions are usually very respectful and accommodating but because productions move quickly. Production companies will run into major issues when it takes a long time to get decisions made or permits signed or issued. Often when these tasks take an extended period then, the productions will look elsewhere to establish a production footprint.
8. Being film-friendly often comes down to the ease of the permitting process and the ability of local officials to understand the needs of the production and facilitating them quickly.
9. When consulting with a production company about shooting specific scenes in your community, don't be afraid to ask questions. For example, how will all the production trucks and extras impact traffic downtown? Will there be a lot of lights and noise at night you should inform citizens about? Where will all the trash go? It's your community, and the more facts you have the better you can serve both the production company and your citizens. Some shooting requests may be unreasonable, and it's fine to say so, but hear the company out and remember to be as flexible as you can. Also, remember that even the most carefully planned shoots can and do change without warning (weather delays, actors getting sick, etc.).

Attracting a production to your community is undeniably exciting news. We all want to promote your community's success in bringing such projects to your area. But we also have to follow certain guidelines when it comes to media exposure and information released to the community. We all want to be good hosts for visiting productions, while also serving our citizens.

Most production companies are aware there will be heightened public interest in their shoot. The producer's job is to deliver the shoot on time and on budget, and in such a pressure cooker environment they try to keep unsolicited public interference to a minimum.

We all understand in this age of fast-moving news, omnipresent cameras and social media it's difficult to keep a lid on such a conspicuous industry. But the guidelines below should help you to be the best host you can be:

1. When you hear of a potential project scouting your community, resist informing the local media. Production companies generally wish to keep their projects confidential when they are in the development stage. You also do not want to raise local expectations. Most of the time, a movie or television show is scouting numerous locations besides yours, and may not choose your community in the end.
2. When a production has committed to shooting in your community, one of your first tasks should be to find out if they've hired a publicist or someone who would handle media inquiries. Find out who that person is, especially if you've been working closely with the location manager or others.
3. Avoid publishing confidential information and "behind the scenes" photos on social media during production, unless the company has no issues or wishes to partner with you – again, ask before you do it. This also includes sharing/liking such posts from others outside your office. Studios often do not want unauthorized production details leaked in advance. Once a project is wrapped and ready for release, it's fine to brag about your experience!
4. Once news spreads that a production is in town, citizens may reach out asking about job opportunities. Locals are often used as extras, so you can offer to work with the production to get the word out if/when extras are needed, or about any other positions the company might need to be filled locally.
5. No matter how wonderful an experience that a film or television shoot might be, you should still be prepared for the occasional complaint from local business owners, citizens and others who feel inconvenienced. Address their concerns, but also remind everyone that the shoot is only temporary and is having a positive impact on your community.
6. In some instances, a production may have a run-in with local citizens, businesses or government entities, or make an unusual shooting request. You may be asked to intervene in such cases on behalf of one side or the other. This is where your connections with local officials as part of your everyday job will be helpful. Use your best judgment in how best to resolve the matter. Remember that while you're trying to be a good host, you also must safeguard the community you work for.



As exciting as hosting a production can be, the local economic impact for your community really makes your efforts worthwhile. Visiting production companies and productions filming in your community can spend a lot of money locally on everything from hotels and supplies to food, fuel, car rentals and many other production expenses.

Example on how can your town economically benefit directly indirectly:

1. Permits fees: You should charge permitting fees to film in your city or town. In certain circumstances, these fees can be discounted or waived to be more film-friendly.
2. If police or traffic officers are needed to shut down a street or to film on any road, productions will pay for for their time.
3. This goes the same for firefighters, ambulances, etc. If you have a volunteer fire department, the money that production will pay to the fire department can go into the volunteer budget.
4. Any and all streets, parks, town buildings can charge a location fee.
5. Businesses ranging from catering, restaurants, bars, hotels, laundromats, dry cleaners, grocery stores, convenience stores, lumberyards, hardware stores, and various retailers will directly and indirectly benefit from productions shooting in your community.
6. The longer that a production stays in your community, the greater the economic impact. For example, if a production has their main production office or base camp in your community, their economic footprint could extend for multiple months - up to a full year in the case of some television shows.
7. When out-of-state cast, crew and staff travel for a production in your community, they will be put up in local hotels and in most cases, given a Per Diem, a weekly allowance for living that they would spend in your community.
8. Productions will often rent vehicles (trucks, vans, rental cars, etc.).
9. Productions provide an opportunity for the community to take the spotlight nationally - and even internationally. This can lead to a boost in tourism and create opportunities for new businesses. It could even attract new residents to your community.
10. Any and all businesses that are being used by productions could have opportunities to promote their businesses beyond the productions, to build a long-term customer base.
11. The best way to show production companies that you are a film-friendly community to making sure that these temporary guests are welcome in your community and that you care about their business. A lot of times these productions will need to find or be connected to businesses in the community. This is where a Chamber of Commerce becomes highly important in servicing these productions that will need all types of services, supplies and support.



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FILM AND TV PRODUCTIONS



Productions would receive Tax Credit for producing in the State

## FILM PRODUCTION (1 Film)

- \*Production Footprint: 3 to 4 Months
- \* Larger Productions could be 4 to 6 months

## TELEVISION PRODUCTION (1 Show - 10 Episodes - 1 Season)

- \*Production Footprint: 10 to 12 Months
- \* 2 Seasons Production Footprint: 18 to 24 Months

### Occupations & Industries Employed by Film Productions:

- Directors
- Electricians
- Painters
- Food Services
- Retail
- Construction
- Logistics
- Hair and Makeup
- Transportation
- Actors
- Writers
- Wardrobe & Clothing
- Police
- Fire
- EMTs & Medical
- Industrial
- Manufacturing
- Legal
- Accounting
- Staffing Services
- Computer Programers
- Engineering
- Administrative Support
- Teachers / Caregivers
- Camera Operators
- Plumbers
- Marketing
- Public Relations
- Graphic Design
- Artists
- Insurance
- Customer Service
- Editors
- HVAC
- Event Planning
- Storage Rentals
- Real Estate
- Banking
- Office Space Rentals
- RV Rentals
- Truck & Car Rentals
- Cleaning & Janitorial
- Locations Rentals
- Portable bathrooms



Employees  
Connecticut Resident



Employees  
Non Local / Non Resident

Income to Spend (Examples)

Spend Per Diem (Living Allowance) per Week

Spends Pay For Rent or for Home Mortgage

Spends Pay for Day Care, or Child Care

Pays off Bills (Electricity, Health Insurance, etc.)

Spends Pay Buying New Car or Paying Car Payments (State Taxes Paid)

Spends at Restaurants, Bars, Retail Stores, Entertainment, Groceries, etc. State Sales Tax, Property Tax, etc. from the Businesses goes to the state.

Resulting in more revenue for these Businesses and growth

Resulting in hiring more employees in which would increase the income tax base.

Stays at Hotels. State Hotel Tax Paid

Orders Room Service

Rents a Car  
Car Rental Tax Paid

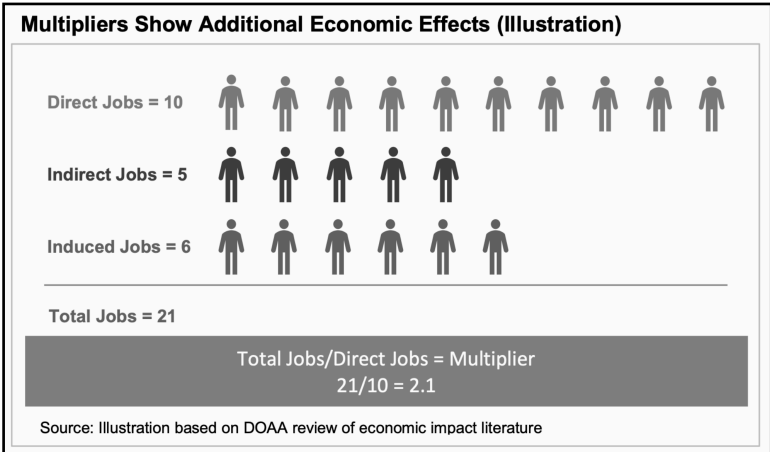
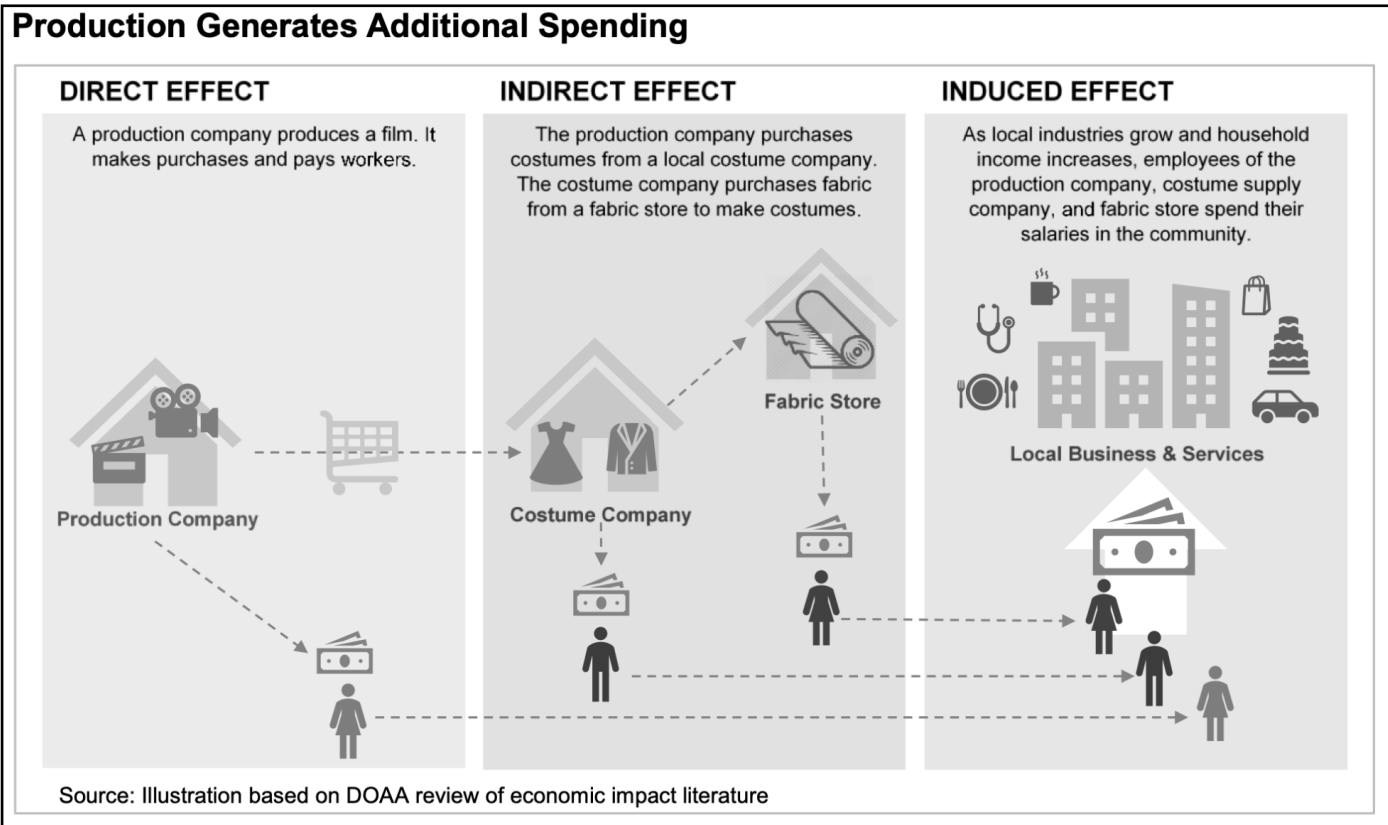
Overall these all have a direct and indirect impact on the economy and also generate more state income and sales taxes. If the state is competitive in regards to bringing in more productions, all of these factors multiply exponentially, creating long term job and economic opportunities.



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FILM AND TV PRODUCTIONS



Film and Television Production and Production Companies spend in all types of ways that can directly and indirectly have a positive effect on the overall economy and economic development / growth. Ideally, having multiple Film and Television productions in one calendar year could increase all of these effects substantially. Without infrastructure and a less competitive Tax Credit the opposite will happen.



With these examples, one can see how increases in the number of Film and TV Productions would lead to a significant increase in the overall economy, as there can be triple the rate of increase from the overall waterfall effect. For example, \$13.8 million would have 3x multiple effect of adding \$41.4 million to the overall local economy in Direct, Indirect, and Induced impacts impact.

### How Productions Can Boost Your Local Economy

A typical movie on location spends more than \$50,000 a day on hotels, restaurants, gas stations, dry cleaners, and hardware stores. Local communities reap economic benefits whenever film productions come to town; jobs are created, money flows into local businesses and tax revenues are generated. For those very reasons, other states including New Jersey, and New York are aggressively competing for film production.