



**MICHIGAN**   
FILM OFFICE

# Guide to Filming in Your Community

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## INTRODUCTION

On April 8, 2008, the state of Michigan enacted what many regard as the most aggressive film incentive program in the nation. Despite any extra attention the industry may bring to the state, the legislation is first and foremost an economic program to help diversify and stimulate the state's economy and create employment. This guidebook has been created so your municipality may be better prepared to handle any filming that takes place, and best take advantage of the benefits that come with hosting a major film production.

## A BRIEF BACKGROUND

In 2008, following passage of the statute, Michigan film activity consisted of:

- 35 projects completed
- \$125 million in production expenditures
- 2,763 individual production jobs

In 2009, film activity consisted of:

- 52 projects completed
- \$233 million in production expenditures
- 4,000+ individual production jobs

For several years subsequent, industry growth is projected to be continuous, and statewide.

## THE MICHIGAN FILM INCENTIVES

The Michigan Film Production Incentive offers a refundable tax credit on expenditures made in Michigan, with a minimum budget of \$50,000. This applies to filmed entertainment projects such as theatrical or television movies, TV pilots and series, reality shows, documentary films, web programming and music videos.\*

The credit applies to all goods, services and labor purchased in-state, while an additional 2% credit is available when filming or vendors are in one of Michigan's 135 "core communities" (page 15).

\*The legislation also covers digital media such as interactive websites, animation and video games, which in most cases will not apply to the guidelines in this booklet.

## MICHIGAN FILM OFFICE

The Michigan Film Office (MFO) is a state agency created to attract filmmakers to Michigan, and assist the overall filmmaking process. As a state organization we try to streamline the process for all parties involved, particularly at the community level, thus the purpose of this handbook.

Since the existing film incentives were enacted the Film Office administers the program itself, including the review and co-approval of all applications. In addition, the MFO provides:

- Resources and facilitation for film productions
- Locations assistance, including photographic and scouting needs
- Guidance for communities to best accommodate productions, and realize maximum benefits.

For your reference, a roster of the MFO staff and contact information is at the back of this guide.

## ROLE OF THE MUNICIPALITY

"Film friendly" is often the current buzz phrase as most every city or town would like production activity to come to its community. The first, most important step in that scenario is to make sure that same sentiment is felt throughout the city's administration. Film productions may have unusual requests and at unusual times, so please be ready to say yes rather than no. As we like to say, "kill 'em with kindness."

If you're good to productions, they can be very good to you; not only with potentially millions of dollars spent in your town, but a return trip for another film, a sequel, TV series, or more importantly, positive word-of-mouth to other producers who may shoot here, not to mention the possibility of increased tourism. It is no coincidence that Mackinac Island's Grand Hotel still hosts an annual convention of fans of the film, *Somewhere in Time*, which was filmed at that location over 30 years ago.

Proactive salesmanship however can get tricky, so we ask you please leave actual solicitation of film activity to the Michigan Film Office. If production companies and studios receive sales pitches from every city in the state, they will get fatigued and quickly uninterested. Since the MFO is the state's primary promotional agent, it continuously presents Michigan's *entire geography* to producers, providing all possible options.

Some municipalities have created websites to present their various attributes for filmmaking, which may work nicely to also streamline your processes. Included on a website could be location photos, airport or freeway proximity, maps, hotels and accommodations, retail and supply resources, recreational and entertainment options, and especially permits, perhaps in printed or PDF versions. Given a community's interest to host filming, the following are some steps to best bring that objective to fruition.

## STREAMLINING THE PROCESS — PRIMARY FILM CONTACT

To achieve the most clarity and efficiency in your local process, it is strongly suggested one person be your primary film contact (PFC). Whether it is in the city manager's office, police dept., mayor's office, or a special department of film activity, one person when empowered is usually best able to streamline the process of approvals, communications, permitting or location help that comes with any production activity.

Film productions often are forced into erratic shooting schedules due to innumerable variables and circumstances, so adhering to long lead times for requests sometimes may not be easy. Realizing council approval is usually required for street closures and special events, many cities have been revising their policies to allow a more immediate approval process, usually shepherded by their PFC. Either way, you should develop a film policy *now* to avoid any problems when a film company arrives. Once that Primary Film Contact is in place, please let the Michigan Film Office know their name so we can have it in our records.

## ROLE OF THE PRIMARY FILM CONTACT

The PFC should be ready for anything, basically. Knowledge of the film industry is certainly advisable, as this position will serve as a hub to all your city's spokes. He/she will need to have immediate knowledge, access, and perhaps authority in any of the following areas, and at any time:

police and fire depts.	snow removal and public works
street closures	parks and recreation
permitting	public transportation
crowd control	schools

parking  
security  
location possibilities  
resources

public and private properties  
entertainment options  
crew and filming needs  
hotels/apartments

## FIRST CONTACT

You may be contacted by a film company before they contact the Michigan Film Office, and if so, please provide the name to the MFO to assist all communications. In addition, you will want to obtain the following information for your own purposes:

- Project title and type (e.g. feature, TV show, reality show, documentary)
- Key personnel (producer, line producer, unit production manager, director)
- Budget range (to give you an idea of the project's scope and needs)
- Basic story line and content
- Location needs and/or breakdown
- Resources needed

## SUPPLEMENTARY OPPORTUNITIES

Aside from actual filming, producers may have other needs that your community can fulfill, such as public buildings and properties that can assist in certain ways:

1. Potential filming location
2. Production office space
3. Production warehouse space for filming, storage, set construction, casting calls
4. Property for base camp operations (trailer and vehicle parking, catering tents)

While the above items can bring needed revenue, you might want to consider a pricing deal as an added incentive, since vacant office space is certainly no rarity these days. Without giving away too much, you might also assess any costs incurred for maintenance, security, utilities, loss of revenue, personnel, parking, etc.

In addition to commercial space and property, productions are always looking for bargains in the form of office equipment, phone/internet service, utilities, etc. that help them stretch their budget.

## LOCATIONS

Know your geography, landmarks, businesses and residences; anything that is distinctive, unusual or especially architecturally unique. Motion picture stories consist primarily of characters, so not surprisingly, locations should have character as well.

Films may want to shoot in unusual or sensitive places, requiring out-of-the box scenarios such as:

- sewer systems
- historic landmarks
- classic or expensive properties
- night shooting
- long term occupation or usage
- using explosives or pyrotechnics

Productions should leave a property as good as, if not better than its pre-filming condition, but you still should be diligent in protecting your locations and properties, utilizing insurance policies for full protection. Feel free to contact the MFO for additional information on issues such as insurance, displacement, impact fees, usage, damage, etc.

## LOCATION SCOUTING

If you are contacted for a scouting trip, please alert the MFO although in most cases we will already be aware, if not directly participating. Aside from a promotional opportunity for your city, a scouting trip is an initial part of the process for the production company. **Please listen** to the needs of their project first, before addressing the attributes of your community. Also, scouting is a very preliminary process, so please refrain from releasing any information to the media. (See Page 6 re: Press and Media).

A scout may be conducted by either a professional location scout (MFO staffer or free lancer), as well as a director, producer or perhaps a star. Either way there will be key decision makers involved, so they should be accommodated wherever possible. This could include an overnight stay, so working with your convention and visitors bureau (CVB) for hotel accommodations will help your cause twofold, since they will also need a large block of rooms when the actual production eventually lands.

*Note: For additional helpful hints, please see the Property Owners Guide to Filming Locations at the end of this guidebook.*

## LOCATION FEES

When it comes to filming on a city property, **the MFO does not recommend what level fees to charge, or negotiating strategies.** However you should be aware of the following:

A film company may make an offer first, before requesting a price from you. That figure will be based on what they've paid for similar type facilities in the past, and will vary depending on size and budget of the production. It may sound high or it may sound low, and while everything is relative and usually negotiable, you should not lose money on the deal. Again, they'll usually offer a fair price for inconvenience, general impact, revenue loss, etc., but don't go into negotiations expecting a windfall as their funds are budgeted very closely, always limited, and they can always go somewhere else quite easily. However, if you feel the offer is below your costs, or the value of what you're providing, you have every right to counter offer appropriately. For required services like police and fire personnel, municipalities should charge normal operational rates.

## LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY

The Michigan Film Office is continuously expanding its photo library and welcomes additional files, so any photos in your database are even more useful if added to our database. All submissions must be digital, and should feature the following:

- Be well framed with no obstructions
- Shot in good lighting, and from different angles
- Have no personal poses
- Exterior shots: From across the street facing the property; also, from the property looking outward, showing adjacencies. Remember, we are interested in the space overall.
- Interior shots: One shot of one end of the room, and a reverse shot of the room's other end.

Photos should be burned as JPG files onto a CD, properly labeled with each location, and filed in a separate folder.

Complete the Property Data Form (page 14) and send with CD to:

Michigan Film Office  
ATTN: Mike Grabemeyer  
300 N. Washington Sq. , Lansing, MI 48913

You can also submit photos on-line through our website at [www.MichiganFilmOffice.org](http://www.MichiganFilmOffice.org).

*Note: Individuals submitting photos of their private property should also know film shooting may require extenuating circumstances such as full-time occupancy, night and weekend shooting, structural changes, and/or renovations. Property owners' contact information will be equally necessary.*

Again, for additional helpful hints, see the Property Owners Guide to Filming Locations on pages 12-13.

## STREET CLOSURES

Few things are as frustrating as an unforeseen traffic jam, so when a film company needs to close a street, it is best to get word to your populace as early and effectively as possible.

If a street or interchange is going to be closed, you can communicate the info in a variety of ways to best notify drivers and residents.

- News advisories to all newspapers, TV and radio stations
- Postings on the city website
- Mobile electronic messaging signs
- E-blasts to community groups and data bases
- Coordination with local transportation authority
- Traffic re-routing signage
- Temporary RESTRICTED or NO PARKING signs posted at curbside, and/or meter covers with days or hours of restrictions.

Businesses and residents should also be given equal notification, but with more direct contact, which you might want to require in your permitting process. Film companies are used to this notification process, which should consist of notices distributed directly to businesses and their management; and to residents, either in mailboxes, or posted at apartment building entrances. Some type of proof-of-performance statement or mechanism may also be desired.

Businesses will usually be reimbursed by film companies for lost revenue during street blockage. A fair dollar amount would be negotiated individually between the film company and the business. Depending on the size of your city or town, your chamber of commerce may also wish to be included in the dialogue.

## PERMITTING

Sample forms are at the back of this guidebook. Again, simplicity is key for both process and paperwork. Printed forms should be available, as well as PDFs, for downloading or completing on-line.

**Fees:** Many cities charge a small nominal fee for the permit itself, with separate fees or hourly charges imposed commensurate with the services or personnel provided (police, fire, public works, sanitation, etc.).

The most commonly used permits are: location use, police/fire permits, street closure permits

## PRESS AND MEDIA

It has been encouraging to see press interest so high since the incentives passed, as the media continue to crave any nugget of information on film activity. However, film companies may often be very reticent depending on the nature of the production, the stars or other involved circumstances. Any press queries you receive regarding any aspect of a production—be it stars, locations, shooting schedule, set access—should be forwarded to either the MFO, or the production's unit publicist. Please do not release to press any film-specific or proprietary information without clearance from either of these two parties.

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS AND CAVEATS

**Film Company Requests:** Productions, producers or even stars may occasionally have unusual needs that push your patience, resources or even abilities. Please give it your best shot. These folks are often used to being accommodated at every turn, so when it doesn't happen, disappointment can easily occur. This type of situation may not be normal, but it is the reality.

**Discretion and Professionalism:** Remember, time is money on a film set as serious work is being done for 12, 14 or more hours a day. Anything delaying a shot setup, ruining a take, or casting daylight can cost thousands of dollars, filmmaker patience, and even worse, goodwill for the state. All sets are closed to the public so any requests for a set visit should be relayed by your PFC to either your producer contact or the unit publicist.

**Egos and Restraint:** Local film activity is indeed exciting, but unfortunately is not carte blanche for photo opps with stars. While it is nice that some stars may accommodate, some also may not, so please respect their decisions. These folks are here to work, and undue pestering can easily lead to a negative experience.

**No Local Exclusivity:** As much as we want each community to thrive in this program, it is unreasonable to force film productions to hire extras or vendors only from within your borders. This is a statewide program, designed to spread commerce and employment in your town as well as adjacent areas.

**Not a Slam Dunk:** While Michigan's incentives are the nation's most aggressive, there are still other very attractive options nationwide. Remember, we're still inviting, growing and maintaining a new industry, so we want to give them the best process, cooperation, assistance, locations, personnel, hospitality, work ethic and experience we can. So hopefully they will come back again, perhaps multiple times.

**Welcome Packet:** Again, with your CVBs, providing a package with local options for both personal and professional use is advisable, including vendors, restaurants, theatres, events, nightclubs, museums, coupons, housing information, retail options, parks and rec opportunities and any other useful information about your community.

**Gift baskets:** Often provided to producers and the director at their hotel upon arrival, as a token of your appreciation.

## THAT'S A WRAP

Once a film completes principal photography, the production office may remain open days or weeks after filming has wrapped. If there are any outstanding issues with vendors, property owners or other parties, resolve them as soon as possible before the company leaves your community, possibly creating complications down the line.

Productions occasionally will return for re-shoots or pick-up shots, and may contact you accordingly, but please do not count on that for return discussions. If any problems do arise, please notify the Michigan Film Office.

While we all greatly anticipate the appearance of our state on screen, it is often many months or even years before a film may hit theaters, video stores or TV screens. The MFO website will have regular updates on which productions are debuting and when.

## FILM INDUSTRY RESOURCES

As this is a new industry to many in the state, your PFC can easily brush up to better accommodate the clientele through some useful resources. Below are websites and publications from which you will find the projects coming to the state, the people and companies behind them, and many other developments in this exciting new business, from training and employment opportunities to local film festivals:

The Michigan Film Office website	<a href="http://www.MichiganFilmOffice.org">www.MichiganFilmOffice.org</a>
Daily Variety ( <i>industry trade paper</i> )	<a href="http://www.variety.com">www.variety.com</a>
The Hollywood Reporter ( <i>industry trade paper</i> )	<a href="http://www.hollywoodreporter.com">www.hollywoodreporter.com</a>
Internet Movie Database ( <i>lists titles, cast, crew and company backgrounds of all films or TV shows ever exhibited in theatres or on television</i> )	<a href="http://www.imdb.com">www.imdb.com</a>
Hollywood Creative Directory ( <i>lists all national production companies</i> )	<a href="http://www.hcdonline.com">www.hcdonline.com</a>

## MOST IMPORTANTLY

If you have any questions at all about the industry, or any elements included here just ask us at 800.477.3456. We are listed below and ready to help:

### Michigan Film Office staff

Carrie Jones, <i>Director</i>	<a href="mailto:jonesc@michigan.org">jonesc@michigan.org</a>
Alice Florida, <i>Executive Assistant</i>	<a href="mailto:floridaa@michigan.org">floridaa@michigan.org</a>
Michael Grabemeyer, <i>Locations Manager and Webmaster</i>	<a href="mailto:grabemeyerm@michigan.org">grabemeyerm@michigan.org</a>
Tony Garcia, <i>Locations Scout and Research</i>	<a href="mailto:garciat@michigan.org">garciat@michigan.org</a>
Michelle Begnoche, <i>Senior Communications Advisor</i>	<a href="mailto:begnochem@michigan.org">begnochem@michigan.org</a>
Richard Jewell, <i>Workforce Development Manager</i>	<a href="mailto:jewellr@michigan.org">jewellr@michigan.org</a>
Selam Ghirmai <i>Promotions Agent</i>	<a href="mailto:ghirmais@michigan.org">ghirmais@michigan.org</a>

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Assistant Director (AD):** Manages the personnel and crew on-set, preparing for each shot's setup.

**Art Director (or production designer):** responsible for the design, look and feel of a film's set .

**Base camp:** a central area where all the support vehicles are located.

**Call sheet:** a schedule given out daily during a film's production to let every department know when they are supposed to arrive and where they are to report.

**Cover set:** alternatives to the scheduled work for any given day.

**Director of Photography (cinematographer, or DP):** responsible for the visual look of a film, as well as lighting and camera work.

**FAM:** a familiarization tour of the potential filming locations.

**Honeywagon:** Usually a trailer, or truck and trailer combination outfitted for, and used as, the dressing room for actors when on location shoots.

**Line producer:** A producer who is responsible for managing every person and issue during the making of a film.

**Location manager:** Person who finds, and secures a property or site for filming, before during and after production takes place.

**Location scout:** A person who looks for suitable locations for filming.

**Production Assistant (PA):** (also Set Production Assistant, Gopher, Personal Assistant) Responsible for various odd jobs, stopping traffic, acting as couriers, etc.

### **Unit Production Manager (UPM)/Production**

**Manager (PM):** Responsible to a senior producer for the administration of the movie, this person supervises the budget, hires the crew, approves purchase orders and time cards, and generally makes sure all departments are doing their respective jobs.

## SAMPLE PERMIT FORM and SUGGESTED ITEMS

### LOCATION USE and PERMIT APPLICATION

Submission Requirements: (No. of days before filming date)  
(Also list approximate or minimum time to process application, e.g. 2-4 days maximum)

**Project Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Format:  Film       TV Series       TV Movie       Reality Show       Commercial  
 Music Video       Documentary       Other – Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Production Company: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Office phone: \_\_\_\_\_ fax: \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Production Contact**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Producer**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Director**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Production Manager**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Location Manager**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATIONS OF FILMING AND DETAILS				
Date	Hours	Location Address(es)	Street/intersection of Filming (e.g. no. of lanes, sidewalk usage, parking needs, etc.)	Brief Description of Scene (include driving shots if applicable)
Special effects or conditions: <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Explosives/pyrotechnics/flammables <input type="checkbox"/> Other – Describe: _____				
Special effects or conditions: <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Explosives/pyrotechnics/flammables <input type="checkbox"/> Other – Describe: _____				
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Special effects or conditions: <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Animals <input type="checkbox"/> Explosives/pyrotechnics/flammables <input type="checkbox"/> Other—Describe: _____				

No. of trucks: \_\_\_\_\_ Trailers: \_\_\_\_\_ Autos: \_\_\_\_\_ Other (cranes, condors, lighting rigs): \_\_\_\_\_

No. of cast: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of crew: \_\_\_\_\_

Base camp location: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Underwriter or Broker: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Issuing Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy No.: \_\_\_\_\_

(List minimum dollar amount of policy required): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PARKING TOW-AWAY POLICY:** Establish policy and relocation area for tow-aways who violate parking restrictions

Span of addresses of residents affected: \_\_\_\_\_

Span of addresses of businesses affected: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED:** Copies of notices distributed to affected residents and businesses. Include with days and hours of shooting, any details of inconvenience, ramifications, suggested alternatives or accommodating ideas, access, parking, tow-away policy. Should be delivered or posted at least three business days before filming.

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

**PERMITS APPLICABLE**

Police Dept. Permit # \_\_\_\_\_ For public safety, street closures, traffic control  
Fire Marshall Permit # \_\_\_\_\_ For any combustible elements, public safety conditions  
City Engineering Permit# \_\_\_\_\_ Street access, public works and infrastructure access

**MUNICIPAL CHARGES**

No. of Personnel Required: \_\_\_\_\_ Police: \_\_\_\_\_ Fire: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daily or hourly charges: \_\_\_\_\_  
Any supplementary costs: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE ATTENTION OF:**

*(City Film Contact)*

By fax at: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail or deliver to: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

*(Issued with permits; should be printed and distributed to crew; can be additionally formulated to best apply to your municipality; Evidence of R&Rs not adhered to may result in revocation of permit)*

- All vehicles must not block or interfere with fire hydrant access
- Cables and equipment must be covered or hidden to avoid any interference with pedestrian traffic, private driveways, handicapped parking
- Proper courtesy required to all businesses and residents
- Traffic may be stopped or re-directed only by city barricades, or police personnel
- Truck engines or active generators should not be placed near residents' windows
- Make certain that any vehicles are not too high for clearance under trees
- Provide blackout materials for residents' windows for night shooting
- Obtain proper authorization to use government agency or properties (parks, bridges, courthouses, etc.)
- Do not allow crew or extras to park on set
- Keep noise to a minimum before 8 a.m. or after 11 p.m.

## PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE TO FILMING LOCATIONS

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Significant dollars are added to the state's economy each year by film and video production companies and commercial still photographers who choose to work in Michigan. One of the ways those production dollars get into Michigan's economy is via the fees paid to private property owners for use of "locations." Production companies and photographers produce feature films, documentaries, television shows, television commercials, print ads and catalog photographs. Locations can be as common as an overgrown field, the interior of a bar or the front yard of a house in a residential neighborhood. In Michigan, they also can be as exotic as an island lighthouse, sports arena, or coastline helicopter shot. Allowing the use of your home, land or business as a location can be an exciting and possibly. It can be a profitable venture if the scope of the project and the process is clearly understood. Productions usually leave money behind with other businesses and landowners in the area. It can be a positive opportunity for the entire community.

This guide is aimed at helping you evaluate the pros and cons of your own situation should you be approached by a production company about the use of your property as a location. Step by-step guidelines about the process of becoming a "location" are provided.

### THE IMPACT OF THE FILM INDUSTRY IN MICHIGAN

The economic benefits of film industry productions in Michigan have recently come to light. First, there are direct economic benefits of the money spent on wages, products and services. The production company itself spends dollars with local businesses on lodging, clothing, groceries, restaurants, fabrics, lumber, hardware, office supplies, laundry services, etc. Individual cast and crew members may spend money on any or all of the above plus leisure activities, books and magazines, souvenirs—the list could go on and on. Even temporary "extras" and curious visitors from neighboring areas will leave additional dollars within the community hosting a production.

Productions also play a part in creating and retaining jobs within the state, as they allow Michigan's freelance film crew members and support services to earn their living.

These projects are much like having a new, medium-size business move into the community, except that they generate thousands or millions of dollars of activity over a few months instead of a few years.

### LOCATION OWNER SERVICES

#### Information and Guidelines

Straightforward information about how the film industry works and what the location owner should consider is provided in this brochure and through direct contact with the Film Office. Sample location contracts will be provided upon request. However, the Film Office does not become involved in actual contract negotiations.

#### Location photos and resource listings

Photos of selected properties are kept on file in our office for use in custom photo presentations requested by production companies. Property owners who would like to have their locations considered for inclusion in the state's location files are encouraged to submit photos using the forms provided in this document. Information about locations, as well as photos and other resources made available to interested productions are maintained by the Film Office.

### FILM INDUSTRY SERVICES

#### Location Research

This includes location photography as well as information and assistance in finding and securing locations. An extensive photo library is used to provide photo presentations of Michigan locations that are customized to meet the needs of inquiring production companies.

#### Production Assistance

Information and assistance regarding accommodations, equipment, transportation, crew members and local services are provided through direct contact and the Michigan Production Directory.

#### Liaison

Information and assistance are offered with federal and state agencies, city offices and local businesses, as well as individual landowners and the general public.

## THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A LOCATION—A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

A request to use your property as a location is, in fact, a business proposal. Since each project has specific considerations, it is impossible to address all situations. However, the following guidelines should provide a basic foundation on which to establish an agreement between the property owner and the film company that is successful for everyone.

- Initial contact is generally made by a location scout, or location manager. This person is often hired locally by the film company but also may be from out of state. His/her credentials can generally be confirmed through the Michigan Film Office.
- Determine the nature of the project and how the location will be used. It is reasonable to ask to read the script segment where the property will be used. Will there be smoke, fire, gunshots or other effects?
- Determine the exact number of days required for the shoot. Be aware that a “day” can be as long as 16 hours and can be either daytime or nighttime. Days required should include:
  - ◊ “Prep days” (preparation time before actual filming)
  - ◊ Days of actual filming
  - ◊ “Strike” days or “wrap” days after filming (the time needed to return the location to the agreed upon condition)
  - ◊ Back-up days (also known as “cover set” days)
- Arrange for a walk-through with the location manager to determine such specifics as:
  - ◊ Exact interiors and exteriors desired for filming
  - ◊ Where equipment and vehicles will be positioned or parked
  - ◊ Any “off-limits” areas as determined by the owner
  - ◊ Any areas (such as roof, trees, fences, windows) which may need to be used or altered during filming
- Determine which personal property in or on the location is desired for use, how and where to store items not used, and who will be responsible for packing and moving items
- Determine who will be allowed “on set” (location) during periods of use and how this will be enforced. A feature film or television movie may have a crew of 60 to 150 people; commercials may require 5 to 40 crew members; documentaries and video crews usually require fewer crew.
- Determine rules and regulations regarding:
  - ◊ Smoking
  - ◊ Use of restrooms, water, electricity, kitchen, food, laundry, etc.
  - ◊ Where meals will be eaten
  - ◊ Trash collection and disposal
  - ◊ Floor coverings
- Determine phone use and how the bill is to be covered (\$20 upfront courtesy? All calls collect? Calls to production office only?)
- Determine how the owner and family will be accommodated during location use and any living expenses that may be required.
- Designate parking for personal vehicles.
- Location fees are negotiable. The owner should feel comfortable with the amount agreed upon, and payment should be made in full prior to any filming. If the movie is legitimate, this should never be a problem.
- The owner should have agreed-upon specifics *in writing*.
- The owner should get a certificate of insurance, including a hold harmless clause for protection in case of any injuries on the property. All production companies should carry insurance policies that cover third-party rentals for property damage and liability. A copy of the insurance certificate should be given to the owner before any crew comes on the property.
- It is important to understand that, with the uniqueness of each film project, unforeseen circumstances or even weather changes can require more time, additional space, additional personnel, etc. This is the norm in making motion pictures, so contingency plans, options, and fees should be discussed with the production company.
- Determine clean-up requirements: who is responsible, time limit for completion (such as 24 to 48 hrs.), etc. Arrange for a final walk-through for owner approval.
- Don’t be afraid to ask a lot of questions! Make sure you fully understand the terms of the contract, and in turn, that your conditions are understood.

Please contact the Michigan Film Office if you have any concerns or questions about your property being used as a location.

## PROPERTY DATA FORM

If you are interested in listing your property with our office, please follow the instructions below to submit digital photos.

### Digital photos guidelines (JPG format)\*:

- Shoot single images in a landscape orientation.
- Shoot both the interior and exterior of the property. Remember to always include an establishing shot of the property shot from across the street, and a reverse of it shot from the property to show both the property itself and its immediate surroundings. Use the same rationale for the back of the property.
- Shoot the space, and not individual decorative details. Stand at one end of the room, off from the corner, when taking the photo, and then shoot a reverse from the opposite side of the room.

\*If submitting digital photos is not possible please contact our office.

### Submitting your location:

- Burn JPG files onto a labeled CD/DVD
- For multiple locations, separate your pictures into separate folders
- Fill out the Property Data Sheet (below) and send with the photo
- Mail to: Michigan Film Office  
Attn: Michael Grabemeyer  
300 North Washington Square, Lansing, MI 48913

Your photos will be added to our library, and be available for viewing by location professionals worldwide seeking the perfect location for their projects. You will be contacted by the Michigan Film Office if they are interested in using your property for their production. There is no cost to listing your property with our office. Please feel free to contact our locations department if you have any questions.

Location name (*i.e. Henderson farm, Atrim County Courthouse, Wyman Main Street*) \_\_\_\_\_

Location address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Name of signing authority (*if different from contact*) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or other \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Contact e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Type of location (*i.e farm, office building, coastline, etc*) \_\_\_\_\_

Year built \_\_\_\_\_

Usage restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

Fees (*if known*) \_\_\_\_\_

Structures on property \_\_\_\_\_

Available parking \_\_\_\_\_

Description/special features (*pool, fireplaces, room dimensions, etc.*)

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**LIST OF  
CORE COMMUNITIES**

1. Adrian
2. Albion
3. Allegan
4. Alma
5. Alpena
6. Ann Arbor
7. Bad Axe
8. Bangor
9. Battle Creek
10. Bay City
11. Benton Harbor
12. Bessemer
13. Big Rapids
14. Bronson
15. Burton
16. Cadillac
17. Carson City
18. Caspian
19. Caro
20. Center Line
21. Charlevoix
22. Charlotte
23. Cheboygan
24. Coldwater
25. Coleman
26. Corunna
27. Crystal Falls
28. Dearborn
29. Dearborn Heights
30. Detroit
31. Dowagiac
32. East Lansing
33. Eastpointe
34. Ecorse
35. Escanaba
36. Ferndale
37. Flint
38. Gaastra
39. Gaylord
40. Gibraltar
41. Gladstone
42. Gladwin
43. Grand Haven
44. Grand Rapids
45. Grayling
46. Hamtramck
47. Harbor Beach
48. Harper Woods
49. Harrison
50. Harrisville
51. Hart
52. Hartford
53. Hastings

54. Hazel Park
55. Highland Park
56. Hillsdale
57. Holland
58. Houghton
59. Howell
60. Inkster
61. Ionia
62. Iron Mountain
63. Iron River
64. Ironwood
65. Ishpeming
66. Ithaca
67. Jackson
68. Kalamazoo
69. Lake City
70. Lansing
71. Lapeer
72. Lincoln Park
73. Livonia
74. Ludington
75. Manistee
76. Manistiquie
77. Marquette
78. Marshall
79. Mason
80. Melvindale
81. Menominee
82. Midland
83. Monroe
84. Mt. Clemens
85. Mt. Morris
86. Mt. Pleasant
87. Munising
88. Muskegon
89. Muskegon Heights
90. Niles
91. Norton Shores
92. Norway
93. Oak Park
94. Omer

95. Oneway
96. Owosso
97. Petoskey
98. Pinconning
99. Pontiac
100. Port Huron
101. Portage
102. Reed City
103. River Rouge
104. Rogers City
105. Saginaw
106. St. Ignace
107. St. Johns
108. St. Joseph
109. Saint Louis
110. Sandusky
111. Sault Ste. Marie
112. Southfield
113. Standish
114. Stanton
115. Sturgis
116. Tawas City
117. Taylor
118. Three Rivers
119. Traverse City
120. Trenton
121. Vassar
122. Wakefield
123. Warren
124. Wayne
125. West Branch
126. White Cloud
127. Wyandotte
128. Wyoming
129. Ypsilanti

**Townships**

130. Benton (*Berrien*)
131. Buena Vista (*Saginaw*)
132. Genesee (*Genesee*)
133. Mt. Morris (*Genesee*)
134. Redford (*Wayne*)
135. Royal Oak (*Oakland*)

**Villages**

136. Baldwin

