



Film/Video/Media Production Policy

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Updated **MAY 2024**

Background & Purpose

The City of Pooler ("City") desires to make it easier for filming in the City insomuch as it brings employment opportunities, tourism, hotel occupancy, and general economic development to the Community. Additionally, a specific policy will deter and limit unregulated commercial film production and similar activities from occurring within the City that would cause a public nuisance and pose a threat to public health, safety, and welfare.

The City of Pooler invites and encourages film and video production utilizing City property so long as the City's primary responsibility to provide service and protection to the general public is not impaired and provided that the City is compensated for the time, labor, and other costs associated with allowing the utilization of City owned property and facilities.

This policy has been designed in order to outline the parameters and process for obtaining a production permit for any filming to occur in the City of Pooler.

Summary of Procedures & Scope

- **Filming on Private Property**
Filming on private property requires permission of the property owner but does not require a permit from the City unless certain activities are included which may impact public health, safety, and welfare. These activities include but are not limited to guns in display of the public; public nudity; special effects such as fire, explosives, or pyrotechnics; nondomestic animals; or filming outside the hours permitted by the City/County's Noise Ordinance.
- **Filming on Streets and Right-of-Way**
Filming on streets and rights-of-way requires a permit from the City. Any filming activity that may disrupt the normal flow of traffic will require the hiring of off-duty, POST-certified police officers. Any costs for the hiring of off-duty, POST- certified police officers shall be paid for by the applicant/production company.
- **Filming on Public Property**
Filming on public property, including publicly owned parks and facilities, requires a permit from the City. The potential need for City personnel and/or equipment, including POST-certified police officers, will be determined through the application review process. Any costs for the hiring of off-duty, POST- certified police officers shall be paid for by the applicant/production company.

Definitions

Applicant means any person, business, or other entity submitting a request to the City for a film permit to engage in commercial filming or commercial still photography on City Property.

City Property means and includes, but is not limited to, any park, recreational facility, building, water body, or real or tangible property owned or controlled by the City.

Commercial film means and includes all digital or film recording of a visual image or sound recording by an applicant for a market audience, such as for a documentary, television or feature film, advertisement, the creation of a product for sale, or the use of actors, models, sets, props or similar project, but not including activities associated with broadcasting breaking news.



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Commercial Still Photography means the use of photographic equipment by an applicant to capture still images on film, digital format, and other similar technologies now in existence or will be created and is intended for a market audience or for sale.

Charitable or student films means any filming by a nonprofit organization, which qualifies under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as a charitable organization or done on behalf of an accredited educational institution.

Filming means and includes all activity involved or ancillary to staging or shooting motion pictures, television shows or programs, commercial still photography, video tapes, computer-based programs, or other visual reproduction technology now known or hereafter created. The period of filming includes the set-up, strike and time of photography, and any pre-production and post-production activities on said film.

Film Location Agreement means the standard form agreement developed by the Office of the City Attorney for use by the City and the Applicant to create a binding relationship between the parties regarding commercial filming or commercial still photography on City Property. This agreement may be modified from time to time by the Office of the City Attorney to meet the needs of the City.

Filming Permit means the permit required by this policy.

Production Crew means any and all persons who are in any way involved with or engaged in filming, including, but not limited to, all who will or who customarily receive credit of any sort either during opening or closing credit sequence of a completed film.

Production Location means any location at which filming is to take place.

Production Equipment means and includes any and all equipment utilized during filming which shall include, but not be limited to cameras, video recording devices, sound recording devices, lighting equipment, sound equipment, tracking, scaffolding, cranes, and temporary vending or other equipment used for providing food and beverages to the production crew.

Production Vehicles means and includes any and all vehicles which are in any way utilized during filming including transporting the Production Crew to and from the Production Location which may include, but is not limited to campers, mobile homes, automobiles, trucks, trailers, motorcycles, and helicopters.

Temporary Structure means and includes any and all structures assembled on or near a Production Location for the purpose of filming. Filming on private property requires permission of the property owner but does not require a permit from the City unless certain activities are included which may impact public health, safety, and welfare. These activities include but are not limited to guns in display of the public; public nudity; special effects such as fire, explosives, or pyrotechnics; nondomestic animals; or filming outside the hours permitted by the City's Noise Ordinance.

Process for Application and Application Review

The City of Pooler shall utilize the following process for consideration of filming permits:

- **Permit Application**

The applicant shall make an application to the City for filming to occur in the City of Pooler on a form prescribed by the City.



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Each application for filming shall be accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee in such amount as may be set by Resolution of the City Council.

- **Permit Application Review**

Upon the receipt of a complete application, the City Manager or their designee shall review the application and may refer to such appropriate City departments as are impacted by the proposed filming for review, evaluation, investigation, and recommendations regarding approval or disapproval of the application.

As part of its due diligence, for filming occurring on public property, the City may seek to acquire basic information about the proposed film and/or a treatment for the film.

Proposed filming which includes the building or assembly of temporary structures, pyrotechnics, or open flames may also require review and approval by the City Fire Department.

Onsite food preparation may also require review and certification by the Chatham County Health Department or State of Georgia. Catered and/or pre-packaged food is not subject to this provision. Filming production companies are encouraged to use local businesses to provide craft services.

- **Permit Application Approval or Denial**

The City's approval or denial of an application for a filming permit shall be provided to the applicant in writing within 5 days of the receipt of a complete application. Failure by the City to respond within 5 days does not automatically signify the City's approval of the application.

The City of Pooler reserves the right to deny any film application as it deems necessary.

Conditions to issuing a permit include, but are not limited to the execution of a Film Location Agreement for the use of City Property.

- The Film Location Agreement shall be accompanied by a valid Insurance Certificate for the production company, naming the City of Pooler as additional insured, and providing at least a \$1,000,000 umbrella liability policy and \$1,000,000 automobile policy.
- As part of the Film Location Agreement, the City may institute additional conditions on filming so as to ensure the City's primary responsibility to provide service and protection to the general public is not impaired and to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City.
- Depending on the proposed uses of City Property, as part of the Film Location Agreement, the City may determine a cash bond to be appropriate. In this event, the City shall advise the film contact of the amount, and this bond shall be remitted to the City before the filming permit is issued.

Reasons for denial of a filming permit include, but are not limited to:

- False or incomplete information on the application;
- The filming will disrupt traffic within the City beyond practical solution;
- The filming will interfere with access to fire stations and/or fire hydrants;
- The location of the filming will cause undue hardship to adjacent businesses or residents beyond



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practical solution; or

- The filming will cause disruption of public services within the City/County and would unreasonably impact the remainder of the Community.

• **Revocation of a Filming Permit**

Reasons for revocation of a filming permit include, but are not limited to:

- False information on the application or failure to comply with all terms and conditions of the permit;
- Failure to arrange for or adequately remit all applicable fees, deposits, insurance, or bonds to the City; or
- Existence of disaster, public calamity, riot or other emergency as the City determines, in its sole discretion, to be an impact upon the public health, safety, and welfare.

Permit Fees

The permit fees for filming shall be set in such amount as determined by the City Council and adopted by Resolution.

- Permit fees shall be paid in full prior to the issuance of the filming permit and in any event no later than 48 hours after the commencement of filming.
- The fees required by this policy shall be in addition to any other fees which may be required by any other applicable Ordinances.
- Should the production crew desire to have use of any equipment owned by the City, such as police cars, park equipment, and the like, an additional fee shall be paid so as to cover the reasonable cost for use of the equipment, as well as the delivery and return of the items to the City.
- Charitable or student films may be excused by the City Manager from the application fee and/or other fees associated with the filming permit if, in his or her reasonable discretion the benefits of the filming exceed the costs to the community at large.:

Exceptions

The following filming and film-related activities are exempt from the permitting requirements of this policy.

- Current news, including reporters, photographers, or camerapersons in the employment of a newspaper, news service, television station, or similar entity engaged in on-the-spot broadcasting of news events concerning those persons, scenes, or occurrences in the news.
- Sound, visual, or sound and visual recordings of open meetings of the State, County, City, School Board, or other political subdivision of the State.
- Filming or still photography created solely for personal family use.



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- Charitable or student films may be excused by the City Manager from certain permitting requirements, such as the liability insurance requirement, if, in his or her reasonable discretion the benefits of the filming exceed the costs to the community at large.

Responsibility of the City

City Council and the City Manager have specific duties in regards to the policy:

- **City Council**

Adopts a policy for film/video/media production with associated fees.

Updates the policy as needed to best reflect the needs of the community.

- **City Manager**

Ensures the City maintains an application form to appropriately gather information for the review of a request.

Ensures applications are reviewed in a timely manner.

Makes final decisions as to the approval or denial of filming permits.

Designates a City staff member to serve as the liaison/be the point of contact throughout film production.

Responsibility of the Film/Video/Media Crew

- **Notification of Affected Businesses**

The Production Company will notify all businesses and residents affected by the activity.

Notification should take place following the City's review and approval of the Filming Permit Application and after meeting with the appropriate City representatives.

Notification should occur no less than five (5) business days prior to the planned activity. Earlier notification may be required in cases where planned activities may have a significant impact on normal activities of the area.

The Production Company is encouraged to consult with the Main Street Director for a calendar of events in the area and to be considerate of those activities, parking needs, etc. The area to be covered by notification may vary depending on the impact of the planned activity but will be a minimum of all businesses or residents in the linear block in which the activity is to occur.

Business should be compensated during imposition due to filming during business hours which include set up, filming, and breakdown.

Contracts for businesses compensated during filming are strictly between individual businesses and the Production Company.

Specifics of compensation will be addressed in a Letter of Understanding distributed to businesses prior



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to the start of filming.

- **Special Considerations for Residential Neighborhoods**

Residential areas, film activities will not begin prior to 7:00 a.m., and will end by 11:00 p.m. weekdays and Sundays, and by midnight on Friday and Saturday, under special permitting.

Residents in the residential area must be notified by letter or in person not less than five days in advance of filming. Notification should include information concerning the location and duration of the filming activity in question, as specifics regarding lights, noise, or any special effects. Notification must also include contact information for the key location assistants and location manager.

All equipment and support vehicles not in immediate use shall be parked so as not to cause any interference to pedestrians or vehicular traffic.

Production vehicles must not block fire hydrants, driveways, or other access ramps unless authorized by the City or property owner.

Production vehicles must be parked in such a way as to not impede safe lines of vision at intersections

Lighting for filming, both during the day and night, should be oriented away from neighboring residences wherever possible, and should not interfere with the safe movement of traffic,

Wherever possible, base camps and dressing room trailers should be parked away from neighboring residences, and/or take steps to control noise from generators, slamming doors, engines, etc., in the early morning before 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m..

A production location manager or key assistant manager should be present at any location being filmed as the primary contact for the City Manager/Liaison unless prior arrangements have been made.

ADA Compliance

Any alterations created by the laying of cabling, placement of equipment or ancillary items related to the production of any filming on any sidewalks, curb ramps or other sloped surfaces in the City where ADA access is provided shall be properly clear of such obstructions. Where such obstructions are necessary for the production of filming, suitable temporary ramps to sidewalks or ADA cable ramps shall be placed to allow for the uninterrupted flow of all ADA traffic.



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OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: _____ Date Issued: _____

Staff Member: _____ Permit Fee: _____

Inspector: _____ Permit Valid: _____

Low-impact applicants need only submit a completed application. High-impact applicants will need to submit a completed application, in addition to a site plan/map and insurance certificate.

General Information

Project Title _____ Date of Application _____

Production Type (tv program, feature film, commercial, etc.) _____

Brief Description/Synopsis of Project/Plot: _____

City of Pooler Locations/Addresses Where Filming Is Planned (include film site and base camp): _____

Film Date Begin _____ Film Date End _____ Total Number of Days _____

Film Time Begin _____ Film Time End _____ Total Number of Hours _____

Size of Cast _____ Size of Crew _____ Extras _____



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Total Number of Vehicles/Equipment Types of Vehicles (trucks, trailers, lifts, RVs, etc.)

Production Company Production Manager

Email Address Phone

Mailing Address

Location/Transportation Company Location Manager

Email Address Phone

Production Type (tv program, feature film, commercial, etc.)

Brief Description/Synopsis of Project/Plot

Special Requests

- Use of outdoor City facilities (streets, parks, building exteriors, etc.)
- Use of indoor City facilities (city hall, police department, municipal court, etc.)
- Closure of City facilities (parks, buildings, etc.)
- Road closures/traffic disruption
- Aerial filming
- Pyrotechnics, gunfire, blank fire
- Amplified sound, bull horns, sirens
- Wild animals
- Public nudity
- Use of extreme obscenity (would require an R or stricter rating)



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Other (please specify) _____

Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement

By accepting a film permit from the City of Pooler, the applicant/production company hereby agrees to release and waive any and all claims against the City of Pooler, its elected officials, boards, committees, officers, agents, attorneys, or employees arising out of, or in any way connected to the project. The applicant/production company further shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of Pooler, its elected officials, boards, committees, officers, agents, attorneys, or employees from any and all losses, claims, cost, damages, or injury to property or person (including death) including legal fees and disbursements, resulting from, arising out of, or in any way connected to the project. The applicant/production company further agrees to comply with and adhere to all local, state, and federal laws, rules and regulations. This permit may be revoked at any time in the sole discretion of the City of Pooler.

Print Name

Signature

Date