

Lights, Camera, Action: Filming FAQs to Support White Rock Merchants

Filming Benefits to You and White Rock!

Bottom line, filming supports our local economy and it's a clean industry. In BC, filming spends \$3B annually and we are trying to encourage them to come spend in our city. White Rock residents, who work in the filming industry, were paid over \$8.89M in 2019. In turn, these residents (filming employees) buy goods and services in White Rock and contribute to the wellbeing of our City. Finally, filming is known to create 'film tourism' where fans come out to see where their favourite shows and movies are filmed.

How Can I Get My Business to be Used as a Filming Location?

The script drives the 'look' for the desired location and all properties have potential. To become a filming location, there are generally two ways:

1. A location scout (the person who finds spots that fit a script) approaches you about filming because your business has a look that fits
2. You can proactively register your property on the Creative BC website so when location scouts are searching the database, they can see you

<https://www.creativebc.com/community/register-your-property>

The City does not get involved in listing or promoting merchant properties. If you are approached to use your business as a filming location, please ensure the owner and renter (as applicable) are involved in creating a written agreement with the production company that outlines privileges, expectations, compensation and responsibilities. If you are uncertain if a Location Scout is bonafide you can check with the City Filming Coordinator, 604-541-2252, or confirm the production is real and active through the Create BC website, and in turn, call the production to validate the Location Scout and interest:

<https://www.creativebc.com/crbc-services/motion-picture-services/in-production>

If My Business Is Used as a Filming Location...What Should I Get Paid?

The City does not get involved in location compensation or mediate disputes between private locations and the film company. It's important to know that compensation is usually scaled to the scope and duration of filming use. Is it an actor just walking into your business (establishing shot) or do they want to film multiple days inside your business? A written location agreement is very important and is based on candid questions and negotiations to determine compensation. As a merchant, you should ensure that you're filming agreement outlines any terms and conditions related to filming. Creative BC has some helpful tips on their website.

What is the Film Application Process?

The City has a Filming Policy and all film companies must abide by the City's bylaws, policies and procedures. The City's Filming Coordinator works closely with the production through a series of steps before granting approval to film in a neighbourhood. When a production is approved, an information letter will be sent to the area businesses and residents outlining important details such as:

- the date(s) and time(s) and location(s) of filming
- parking requests
- special effects, and
- any extraordinary impacts such as traffic control or lighting

The letter will also include the production and the City Filming Coordinator's contact information so you can follow up. The information letter is sent out usually three days prior to the proposed filming date. If the filming will directly impact your business, you will have been approached in advance by the production to discuss any concerns.

The City's film office asks several questions to determine the scope of filming, such as:

1. Where are you planning to park generators, washroom trucks, shuttle vans, and lighting lifts?
2. Is there Intermittent Pedestrian Control on the sidewalk?
3. Is there any Intermittent Traffic Control on any nearby roads?
4. Are there any road or lane closures or partial closures nearby?
5. How will you ensure that filming crew, equipment or cables will not interfere with customers coming to store?
6. How many cast, crew and extras will be on-set?
7. Will you film in any weather or do you have an alternate date if weather is bad?
8. Is filming mostly indoors or outdoors or both?

Production companies must comply with Creative BC Filming Code of Conduct as well as all laws and rules that govern their work (i.e. Provincial, Federal, WorkSafe, etc.)

How do I raise concerns?

In advance of filming: you can clarify your expectations or express your concerns directly with the Location Manager. You can also reach the City's Filming Coordinator anytime. Both of their contact information will be on the information letter.

Once the production company is filming on location: the most immediate person is the on-set contact (usually the Assistant Location Manager); this information will also be on the information letter. You can ask any filming staff member (wearing visibility vests) to radio the on-set contact so you can meet and talk with them. The Filming Coordinator is also available to contact by phone during active filming to assist your filming inquiries.

Why are all those Film Trucks Needed?

It is true, filming does not travel light! To create the onscreen magic, production companies need a large variety of cameras, lights, cables, props and equipment. Then they need all the staff to move set up and operate the equipment in the shortest amount of time possible. In turn, more vehicles are needed to host actors, feed the crew and provide basic amenities. Part of the approval process involves the Filming Coordinator working with the Location Manager to reduce their parking request, and distribute it to several areas, to minimize the on-set parking needs. For example, staff vehicles and the bulk of equipment trucks are parked outside the filming neighbourhood and people and equipment are shuttled in. The information letter will include the parking details for essential on-set filming vehicles and equipment. As some filming equipment is heavy and awkward some essential on-set parking is needed.

What should I do if I think filming will affect my business?

The Information Letter will include the Location Manager's phone number and all financial questions or concerns should be discussed with the Location Manager prior to filming. The City does not advocate or negotiate any financial terms between production companies or merchants, but the City does expect production companies to work fairly with merchants as outlined in Section 4.1 of the City Filming Policy.

Sometimes one production will pay more than another – why?

No two filming productions are the same. Some productions have larger budgets. Filming size, scale, duration, location, and impacts are different with each permit. Filming compensation is based on the magnitude of impacts directly affecting your business. The City does not advocate or negotiate any financial terms between production companies or merchants, but the City does expect production companies to work fairly with merchants as outlined in Section 4.1 of the City Filming Policy.

What are the Filming Policies?

The City Filming Policy along with related bylaws and Creative BC Code of Conduct are all on the City website at www.whiterockcity.ca/filming. The film policy and procedures have been developed and refined with the goal to create sustainable filming.

What happens if Production Companies Break the Rules?

The Filming Coordinator monitors activities with an on-set visit. There is a lot at stake so there are few instances where production companies go beyond the agreed scope or break the rules. However, should you observe anything of concern, the Filming Office should be notified at 604-541-2252. The Filming Coordinator will address the situation with the production company quickly. The Filming Office may levy fines to the production company or in extreme cases revoke the film permit.

For more information, please visit: www.whiterockcity.ca/filming