



COUNTY of VENTURA

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October 8, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Receive and File a Presentation Regarding the Scale and Economic Impact of Filming in the Region from the Economic Development Collaborative Which Fills the Role as The Ventura County Film Commission.

Recommendation:

Receive and file a presentation regarding the scale and economic impact of filming in the region from the Economic Development Collaborative (EDC) which fills the role of the Ventura County Film Commission.

Discussion:

On June 4, 2013, your Board approved a two-year contract with EDC with a \$30,000 contribution toward the newly created Ventura County Film Liaison position. The intent of the initial two-year program was to review data generated during the period and assess the scale and impact of filming as well as calculate the associated community and economic benefits to the region.

On May 10, 2016, your Board approved a contract with EDC for it to continue to serve as the Film Liaison for an annual payment of \$15,000 so long as the County Executive Office determines that the Film Liaison continues to add value to the County and your Board approves inclusion of that amount in the annual budget each year.

The Film Commission and Film Liaison activities are designed to facilitate communication between industry and location representatives, specifically to help avoid conflicts and to improve the overall filming experience for all parties. The intended outcome is an increase in well-managed film activity, resulting in an increase in film shoots, film industry spending, local job retention, and creation. EDC began collecting permit data beginning in August 2013. While there is no standard method of data collection across all permitting jurisdictions, and while the process of securing permit and film activity data continues to evolve and improve, EDC has collected regional film activity data for 2014 through 2023. The economic impact of filming activity for 2023 is recorded at \$42,273,754.

The growth trend line has been interrupted twice in recent years: first in 2020 by the pandemic – followed by a strong recovery in 2021 and 2022 – and again in 2023 by writers' and actors' strikes. This second disruption has had a much broader impact to production worldwide. In Ventura County we saw an annual drop in permits from 1,515 to 803 and in film days from 4,873 to 2,549. These numbers are reported from October 1 through September 30. The role of the Film Commission and Film Liaison, in facilitating communication with the industry and coordinating activity with locations, projects and permitting offices, has been a significant contributing factor.

Filming and Economic Impact:

The data presented by the EDC indicates a significant impact from the 2023 writers and actors strike and an industry reorganizing itself. Using the calculator developed by the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI), these film days conservatively generate some \$42.27 million in direct economic impact within the county.

In addition to this direct economic contribution, filming provides numerous indirect economic impacts. Filming typically creates and sustains at least two additional jobs for every job created in local film activity and stimulates small business activity. It also supports the over 3,500 Ventura County residents who are employed by the film industry and members of associated trade guilds and unions. There are also support and development processes which are essential elements of film industry activity in the region. These include, for example, contractor's storage, mobilization of support equipment, project development, manufacturing of specialty parts, set dressing property businesses within the county and other pre- and post-production operations. Reporting for this past year puts these activities in the neighborhood of \$2.53 million of local economic impact. Filming is a key sector of the entertainment industry and the broader creative economy. The entertainment industry includes motion picture/video production, motion picture distribution, postproduction services, sound recording, radio stations, and television and cable broadcasting, and makes up at least one-third of the nearly \$3 billion creative economy output in Ventura County.

County of Ventura Strategic Priority Alignment:

The EDC's role in enhancing the regional film industry directly supports the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Priority of "Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Vitality." By serving as the Film Liaison, EDC facilitates significant economic impact through film industry activities, which in 2023 alone generated approximately \$42.27 million in direct economic impact within Ventura County. This contribution strengthens the local economy by sustaining and creating jobs, supporting small businesses, and bolstering the creative

economy, aligning seamlessly with the Board's goals to foster a thriving business ecosystem and stimulate industry growth. These initiatives by EDC are crucial in steering Ventura County towards a sustainable economic future, aligning with the Board's vision of creating a vibrant, resilient, and economically diverse community.

This Board letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel, and the Auditor-Controller's Office. If you have any questions, please contact Estelle Bussa at Estelle.bussa@ventura.org.

Sincerely,



Estelle Bussa
DEO Economic Vitality and Service Excellence



Sevet Johnson, PsyD
County Executive Officer