

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Hilda L. Solis
Holly J. Mitchell
Lindsey P. Horvath
Janice Hahn
Kathryn Barger

July 14, 2026

TO: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Kelly LoBianco
Director

Jessica Kim
Chief Deputy

Cynthia Bogdanovich
Administrative Deputy

Leila Lee
*Assistant Director, Business
and Economic Development*

Kate Vacanti
Assistant Director, Workforce

Krystin Hencé
*Assistant Director, Capital
Development*

GET IN TOUCH

510 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
opportunity.lacounty.gov
deo@opportunity.lacounty.gov
(844) 777-2059

America's Job Centers:
(888) 226-6300

Office of Small Business:
(844) 432-4900

FROM: Kelly LoBianco, Director *Kelly LoBianco*

SUBJECT: **REPORT BACK ON MOTION BY SUPERVISORS
KATHRYN BARGER AND LINDSEY P. HORVATH
ADVANCING THE RESILIENCY OF THE FILM AND
TELEVISION INDUSTRY IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY
(ITEM NO. 11 OF JULY 15, 2025, AGENDA)**

On July 15, 2025, your Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion introduced by Supervisors Kathryn Barger and Lindsey P. Horvath directing the LA County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and its LA County Film Office (Film Office), in collaboration with the County departments listed below, to report back in writing in 120 days with progress made on various aspects of permit streamlining, regulatory updates, creation of an Evergreen Fund to support local productions, and analysis of current film related fees. The final 120-day report was submitted to the Board on November 14, 2025. However, the Board requested another update in six months after the Film Office convened a monthly workgroup of County Departments to identify additional streamlined permitting regulations and/or reductions in fees. The following report details additional efforts to reduce barriers to on location filming in the Unincorporated Areas (UA) of the County per Directives one through three.

1. Partner with Chief Executive Office (CEO), Department of Regional Planning (DRP), LA County Fire Department (Fire Department), Department of Public Works (DPW), Department of Beaches and Harbors (DBH), Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks), and Sheriff Department (LASD) to review existing film permitting policies, fees, procedures, minimum staffing requirements, and regulations and to identify any areas that can be reduced, streamlined, or eliminated to improve permitting policies and procedures and reduce costs for production, existing film permitting policies, fees, procedures, minimum staffing requirements, and



regulations and to identify any areas that can be reduced, streamlined, or eliminated to improve permitting policies and procedures and reduce costs for production. The report back should include recommendations for enhancements and changes to film permitting policies, procedures, and zoning regulations as well as comparison to other competing states such as Georgia, New York, New Jersey and Texas.

2. Work with the LASD and County Counsel to encourage usage of electronic signatures to reduce the approval time of private entity contracts required to hire LASD Deputies from approximately ten days down to no more than seven days and to establish a plan to further reduce the approval time.
3. Collaborate with the Fire Department to clarify and simplify the criteria for when a Fire Safety Officer or Fire Safety Advisor is required on set in local film, TV, and theatrical productions, and clearly communicate the process to Industry stakeholders.

Directive one (1) through three (3)

The following section provides specific County Departmental responses to their respective streamlining and fee reduction efforts in support of the film, television, and commercial production industry. The comparative regulatory analysis with other States was included in the November 14, 2025, report.

LA County Film Office – DEO

The Los Angeles County Film Office (Film Office) has had oversight over all Countywide film and television production regulations, policies, and procedures since the passage of a 2016 motion by former Third District Supervisor Sheila Kuehl. Over the past 10 years, the Film Office has provided individual concierge services to productions and County departments related to film, television, and photography permit regulatory navigation; coordination for the use of County properties; and hosting of biannual and quarterly convenings with the industry and County departments. Additionally, the Film Office oversees the County's contract with its permit coordination provider, FilmLA. The Film Office also serves as a centralized County point of contact for assistance with pre-production planning, problem-solving, and any other production-related needs, eliminating the need for production companies and filmmakers to contact multiple departments. Recent updates to the Film Office and the County's film, television, and photography permitting system include:

- Hired one full-time staff member to assist with Film Office responsibilities.
- Standardized the \$400 County property use fee across all departments.
- Led weekly pre-production planning meetings with large-footprint productions such as Baywatch in coordination with DBH and the City of LA.
- Provided \$4.1 million in grants in 2024 to 363 entertainment-related businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the double Hollywood strikes.
- Managed the re-integration of on-location filming into Altadena after the Eaton Wildfire in January 2025.
- In collaboration with County Departments, County Counsel, and entertainment industry stakeholders, created a draft Film Ordinance to be incorporated into Title 2 of the County Code that centralizes all the County regulations and policies related to on-location filming and the role(s) and authority of the Film Office. The Film Ordinance is expected to be submitted to the Board by the end of 2026.

- Finalized the framework and criteria for a new local incentive fund named the “County Film and Television Production Evergreen Fund,” which seeks to increase production activities and strengthen the film industry within the County of Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department

The LASD, through its Contract Law Enforcement Bureau and Sheriff’s Information Bureau, has successfully implemented an electronic signature process for Private Entity Agreements, including those with movie and film production companies, as directed by the July 15, 2025, motion authored by Supervisors Kathryn Barger and Lindsey P. Horvath. It also aligns with Sheriff Robert Luna’s priority to modernize the Department through the adoption of efficient, technology-driven solutions.

The shift to electronic signatures significantly decreases administrative burdens while improving coordination among internal units and external stakeholders, including production companies that require expedited processing.

- The electronic signature system was fully deployed on May 13, 2026, meeting Board expectations and advancing Department-wide modernization efforts.
- The new platform replaces the former wet signature workflow with an end-to-end digital process featuring electronic completion, routing, and approval of agreements.
- Real-time tracking and automated notifications ensure timely reviewer and approver actions, increasing transparency and accountability.
- Implementation has reduced approval timelines for Private Entity Agreements from approximately 10 days to no more than seven days, with potential for further reductions as the system is optimized.

The Department of Beaches and Harbors

In the past six months, DBH has continued to work with the LA County Film Office, FilmLA, and industry stakeholders to review policies to permit more filming activities on County beaches and in Marina del Rey. DBH leadership has remained actively engaged in working with the film industry and partnering with productions to:

- Launch a time-limited pilot program to allow the use of drones on Venice Beach and in Marina del Rey.
- Authorize filming during high-impact periods, which historically was not allowed.
- Allow the use of ATV vehicles and small boat crafts at Venice Beach.
- Streamline processes to facilitate greater operational efficiencies to accommodate filming-related requests and parking needs.
- Coordinate with LA County Lifeguards, CA State Coastal Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, and the City of Los Angeles for expanded access to County beaches and facilities.

DBH remains committed to continued collaboration to provide even greater access to the County’s iconic beaches and Marina del Rey Harbor to further support film industry projects, jobs, and initiatives.

The Department of Parks and Recreation

LA County Parks plays a central role in supporting the film and television industry by offering access to a vast and diverse portfolio of filming locations across its 186 park facilities, 171 of which are available for filming seven days a week. The department provides filmmakers with unparalleled options, including lakes, trails, golf courses, gardens, wildlife sanctuaries, sports complexes, and a wide range of natural and urban environments. Working closely with the LA County Film Office, the department streamlines access, ensures responsible use of public spaces, and prioritizes filming during regular operating hours to minimize impacts on public recreation. Staff assigned to filming permits also oversee compliance, protect park assets, and ensure public safety while maintaining smooth coordination with production teams.

Despite budget constraints due to various factors, such as mandated budget curtailments, the Eaton and Palisades Fires, stalled financial recovery support from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the loss of its temporary seasonal staff roster, Parks remains committed to facilitating filming while balancing its stewardship of public resources. Reduced staffing levels and scheduled closures at a small number of regional parks impact on where filming can occur, but the department continues to collaborate with productions to maximize access during standard operating days. Fee structures—including facility rentals and the County Use Fee—help offset the operational, administrative, and maintenance demands associated with hosting film crews and ensure that filming remains sustainable without diminishing community services. Through these efforts, LA County Parks continues to be a strong partner to the entertainment industry while safeguarding the integrity and accessibility of its public spaces.

Los Angeles County Fire Department

The Fire Department has revised its policies and criteria for the deployment of Fire Safety Advisors (FSA) and Fire Safety Officers (FSO) on film and television productions to streamline its fire safety services and reduce costs for production. The following is a summary of those revisions:

Fire Safety Advisor program reductions:

- When feasible, an FSA will be assigned for a minimum four-hour period, as opposed to eight hours, avoiding full-day oversight unless conditions justify it. For smaller productions involving limited or isolated special effects (FX), the Public Safety & Film Unit (PSFU) will continue to assess each case individually. This will greatly reduce the costs to production by not having an automatic assignment of an FSA regardless of the length of the on-location shoot.
- An FSA will be assigned on the first day of production to verify setup and safety compliance. A Fire inspector will then assess the set to determine if an FSA is needed for subsequent days or a simple spot check will suffice. This applies to multi-day productions that meet the threshold of requiring full FSA assignments. The savings associated with this new procedure will also greatly reduce production costs.
- Create a no-charge FX permit for use of minor, low risk special effects like candles, herbal cigarettes, fire pits, stoves, etc., on a case-by-case basis. (In process)

Fire Department Revised Oversight Matrix for Filming Activities – FSO and FSA

Type of Activity	Level I – FSO	Level II – FSA	Level III – Field Inspection -Spot Check
Special Effects	Extensive Pyrotechnics, Stunts or Special effects on site, live changes or modifications.	Pyrotechnics, explosions, fireballs, flame bars, squibs, oil-based smoke machines, impact effects, other Stunts	Water-based smoke, fog machines, and haze machines.
Firearms / Blanks	In public view and Live firearms.	Simulated firearm activity- ½ or ¼ full loads.	Rubber firearms – not in the public view.
Helicopter Activity	Extensive Helicopter activity with FAA waiver	Helicopter activity with FAA waiver	None
Drone Activity	Unmanned multiple drones show with FAA waiver.	Unmanned drone with FAA waiver	Unmanned drone with FAA waiver
Fueling / Refueling on Set	Hydrogen supply for power.	Active fueling of vehicles/generators	None
Filming Location Type	Schools, County facilities, other	Movie ranches, brush areas, closed roads (closed to public)	Private property, interior/exterior sets, controlled access areas.
Public Access During Filming	Open to public during filming commercial - Government or County buildings.	No – closed or restricted access	No – secure private or interior/exterior space
Size of Production	Large-scale: more than 500 cast/crew, multiple departments	Medium-scale: 50-500 cast/crew, multiple departments.	Small: fewer than 50 cast/crew, minimal equipment
Fire Marshal / Department Special Request	Fire Marshal request, site representative request.	Fire Marshal request, site representative request.	Not typically applicable
Environmental Sensitivity (e.g., SEA, brush)	High profile environmental or sensitive locations	Urban Interface, fire season, red flag areas	Not near sensitive areas.
Traffic Control / Public Safety Interface	None	Road closures, ITC activities pedestrian control.	None

Type of Activity	Level I – FSO	Level II – FSA	Level III – Field Inspection - Spot Check
Previous Compliance Issues	Violations or multiple concerns.	Violations or multiple concerns.	Good compliance history

Note:

- *This matrix is to serve as a guideline; final oversight level is determined by case-by-case evaluation by the Public Safety & Film Unit. Productions may request clarification or consultation in advance of permit approval.*

Justification of County Fee Rates and Property Use Fees

Each Department reviewed its methodology for establishing service and staff fee rates and confirmed that their current rates adequately cover the costs associated with supporting film and television productions. Departments conduct annual budget reviews to determine these service and staff fee rates, incorporating staff salary costs and the expenses required to provide services. Departments can increase their rates annually, but increases are limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Most of the most frequently filmed departments elected not to increase rates for the current fiscal year, only DPW implemented a rate adjustment due to rising material and service costs. FilmLA has also agreed to maintain its existing rates for another fiscal year in recognition of the current industry conditions.

With respect to the standard County Facility Use Fee of \$400 per day, Departments report that while the fee does not fully recover the cost of overseeing production activity, it does provide meaningful budget relief. As such, the Film Office recommends maintaining the Use Fee at \$400/day. The Film Office will continue to monitor and evaluate the overall costs for filming within the UAs and on County properties and will identify opportunities for further reductions or efficiencies as appropriate.

See Next page for Schedule of Fees.

Updated County Film and Photography Fee Schedule FY 26-27

DEPARTMENT	FEE RATE
Fire	
Film review fee	\$343
Special Effects Permit	\$350
Photography Permit review	\$277
Fire Safety Advisor (Retired)	\$64/hr. – OT after 8 hrs.
Fire Safety Officer	\$230/hr.
Water Truck	\$253/day
Department of Beaches and Harbors	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
Department of Public Works	
Encroachment Processing Fee	\$401
Inspection Fee	\$484
Traffic Control Plan Review	\$350 minimum
Sign Removal and Replacement	\$1,720
Street Light De-energization	\$1,200
DPW Flood Control District	
Flood District Use	\$400/day
Express Scouting Permit Fee	\$100
Flood District Permit Fee	\$168
Parks	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo Use	\$100/day for 3 locations
Department of Business and Consumer Affairs	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
Los Angeles Sheriffs Department	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
Deputy I Hourly rate	\$129/Hr
Department of Animal Care and Control	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
Animal Care Use Permit	\$250 for the first day - \$25/day thereafter
Chief Executive Office & Board Executive Office	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
Real Estate Parking Lot	\$200
Probation	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations

DEPARTMENT	FEE RATE
Library	
Use	\$400/day
Strike/Setup	\$100/day up to 3 days
Photo	\$100/day for 3 locations
<i>All other County Departments charge the standard \$400/day and \$100 setup/strike fees.</i>	

Conclusion

Over the past six months, the Film Office has met monthly with County departments to identify opportunities to streamline processes and/or reduce fees. As a result, several key efforts have been implemented to streamline film and television permit regulations, reduce fees, and reduce permitting barriers in the unincorporated areas. Notable progress includes the LASD's implementation of electronic signatures to reduce contract approval timelines from 10 or more days to 7 days or less; increased access and improved coordination by DBH for beach and harbor film use; DPW reduction of the Flood Control District's use fee to the standard County rate of \$400/day and elimination of a \$207 Road Use Permit Application fee; and the Fire Department's adjustment of the criteria for FSA and FSO for location filming. Combined, these updates demonstrate sustained, cross-departmental commitment to enhancing efficiency, reducing costs, and strengthening support for film and television production in the UAs and on County properties.

While these accomplishments represent meaningful progress, continued work is necessary to ensure long-term improvements in permitting processes, the regulatory environment, and interagency communication. The County Film Office will continue to work with departments to evaluate policies, address operational challenges, and identify additional opportunities to better facilitate on-location filming. This ongoing work remains essential to supporting the region's creative economy while upholding public safety and responsible use of County assets.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Gary Smith, Head of the Los Angeles County Film Office, at gsmith@opportunity.lacounty.gov.

KL:LL:GS:npg:dm

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
 Chief Executive Office
 County Counsel
 Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
 Department of Animal Care and Control
 Department of Public Works
 Department of Beaches and Harbors
 Department of Parks and Recreation
 Department of Regional Planning
 Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
 Los Angeles Fire Department
 Department of Probation
 Library
 FilmLA