



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 6, 2013 New Business

SUBJECT: City of Palm Springs Film Friendly Marketing Incentive Program

FROM: David H. Ready, City Manager

SUMMARY

City Council consideration and direction regarding a pilot "Film Friendly Incentive Program" which seeks to encourage film makers and advertising photographers to shoot on location in Palm Springs. Elements of the program include incentives, resource support services, creation of a "one stop shop" film permitting/marketing office and a dedicated web site through the Bureau of Tourism.

RECOMMENDATION: Direct staff as appropriate.

ANALYSIS:

In March of 2012, the Palm Springs City Council voted to waive film permit fees for one year as an incentive to filmmakers and photographers to choose Palm Springs as the site for their projects. The purpose of the incentive was to stimulate additional economic activity generated by film/photo crews who stay in hotels or vacation rentals, eat in City restaurants and utilize various local production resources. As filming/photo shoots can take place over weeks and in some cases months, the economic impact can be substantial.

Subsequently, Councilman Lewin has asked staff to propose a more comprehensive "Film Friendly Incentive Program" with the goal of establishing *The Palm Springs Brand* as a primary site for film, television and advertising photography.

Working in conjunction with the Bureau of Tourism and the City Parks/Recreation Department, a proposed outline of the elements for a "Film Friendly" program includes the following:

DEVELOPMENT

- The Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism will oversee the Marketing and Incentive Program – creating a “one stop shop” for film makers at the Tourism Office on North Palm Canyon and Tram Road.
- Establish a “Film Friendly” Virtual Film Office online at visitpalmsprings.com and on the city’s web site to provide comprehensive information for filming, photo shoots and advertising opportunities. Links will be provided to film permit information and forms, location photo libraries and one-stop information for location producers on local skilled labor such as sound, lighting, etc., in addition to lodging, shopping, dining, transportation services and established destinations for location shoots.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM

- Through a partnership between Tourism and Palm Springs Resorts, an incentive will be created which includes community-wide participation in a “Film Friendly Discount Program” from private vendors that would include discounts to production crews for lodging, meals and film support services.
- For motion picture filming (movies/television shows) a \$5,000 grant (either in cash or offset for “in-kind” services) will be available if production expenditures in the City of Palm Springs total a minimum of \$25,000 (e.g. lodging, meals, other resources, etc.). Additionally, to be eligible for the grant, the movie/television show must acknowledge the “Palm Springs Film Friendly Incentive Program” in its credits.
- Two year extension of the Film Permit Fee waiver.

MARKETING

- Develop print and online advertising presence for the program in film trade publications.
- Incorporate the program into the annual Bureau of Tourism marketing programs.
- Dissemination of information regarding “filming/photography attributes in Palm Springs” such as location settings (e.g. mid-century modern architecture, mountains, etc.) and production cost savings in Palm Springs vs. other Southern California locations.

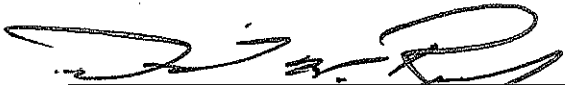
- Development of a "Palm Springs Film Friendly Incentive Program" brochure to be utilized by the State of California Film Commission and the Inland Empire Film Commission.
- The Bureau of Tourism will continue its partnership with the Women in Film and Television Association and the Inland Empire Film Commission – coordinating an additional "familiarization trip" bringing film makers/location scouts to Palm Springs, attend additional industry tradeshows, coordination of web-sites and dissemination of "e-blasts" to appropriate film industry film stakeholders.
- The Palm Springs Convention Center will reach out to film industry events, activities and groups to encourage use of the Convention Center for film related meetings, conferences and seminars in Palm Springs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Start up costs for this pilot program – one year - are estimated to be \$35,000 which includes two areas of expenditures: grants - \$25,000 (up to 5 grants at \$5,000 each), and marketing materials/familiarization trips - \$10,000.

Funding can be obtained from two sources: \$15,000 through a partnership with Palm Springs Resorts, and \$20,000 from the Tourism Budget Continuing Appropriation.

Also, I have requested that Tourism and the Parks/Recreation Department, in conjunction with Palm Springs Resorts, monitor and analyze the overall economic impact of the program over the next year.



David H. Ready, City Manager

Attachment: Film Friendly Incentive Program "Marketing Plan"



“Film Friendly” Marketing Plan

With the \$15,000 in funding available for marketing the “Film Friendly” Palm Springs brand, the Bureau of Tourism can undertake the following efforts:

Create a Palm Springs dedicated film library on VisitPalmSprings.com

- No additional cost for a basic slideshow version
- A database searchable version would cost approximately \$3,000 - \$5,000

Create press releases about “Film Friendly” Palm Springs, highlight films/commercial shoots

- No additional costs

Work with local partners to create and develop a pool of businesses interested in participating and supporting filming with packages, deals and discounts in their locations

- No additional costs

Work with Inland Empire Film Commission to develop:

- Additional fam in the spring bringing location scouts to Palm Springs
- Partner on additional industry tradeshow
- Partner on website to assist IEFC with additional Palm Springs locations/products
- Work with IEFC and California Film Commission to send dedicated e-blasts to location scouts about Palm Springs

Cost: Location Scout fam tour of Palm Springs	\$2,500
Tradeshow participation (1)	\$1,500

Create and direct mail informational brochure to locations scouts brochure describing attributes and locations of Palm Springs, such as:

- Perfect weather year round, more reliable days for shoots and backdrops
- Value of lodging, transportation, casino, dining (less than Vegas)
- Various settings...Mid Century Modern to cowboy, scenic mountains to oasis, etc. can be used for many themes from Sahara to 60's and much more

Cost: 2,500 four color tri-fold brochures/ mailing	\$ 1,000
--	----------



Market directly to location professionals by:

- Place an ad schedule in trade publications to create awareness for Palm Springs:
 - Variety Magazine
 - LA411
 - Hollywood Reporter
- Direct mail brochures to locations scouts and companies
- Enhance location marketing websites with Palm Springs product and photos:
 - Go ForLocations.com (only CC on this so far)
 - LocationScout.com (need to register to upload and view photos)
 - LocationsLA .com (sent an email to see if PS can be on the site)
 - LocationTalk.org

Cost:

Variety Magazine	\$5,000 (1/2 pg)-\$8,000 (full)
Hollywood Reporter	TBD-waiting on response
Ad schedule LA 411	TBD-waiting on response

*Approximately \$5,000 minimum for each of these publications, so we would need to limit the choices to the funds available.

Join key industry organizations to develop relationships in the filming industry, such as:

- Film Liaisons in California Statewide (FLICS), participate in industry events such as:
 - AFCI "LOCATIONS" Trade Show
 - CA. Power Breakfast
 - California on Locations Awards
 - FLICS California Trade Show
- Location Managers Guild of America

Cost: Membership/participation	\$1,000
--------------------------------	---------