

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE 126678
COUNCIL BILL 120412

AN ORDINANCE relating to the establishment of the Seattle Film Commission; adding a new Chapter 3.71 to the Seattle Municipal Code; and amending Section 3.14.600 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, Seattle is one of the most scenically diverse filming locations in the world, having been home to numerous major film productions in a rich history of over 75 years; and

WHEREAS, The City of Seattle (“City”) has long supported the growth of the film industry, small businesses, and film cast and crew; and

WHEREAS, Seattle’s film industry creates high-wage jobs, positive economic development, benefitting small businesses both directly and indirectly related to film production; and

WHEREAS, Seattle’s film industry can support economic recovery by attracting new business that generates jobs, supports Seattle’s small businesses, and brings positive economic growth; and

WHEREAS, Seattle’s film industry contributes to a healthy community and economy by directly creating jobs, and by supporting a wide variety of businesses, and a strong film industry is in the economic, cultural, and educational interest of the region; and

WHEREAS, there is an untapped potential to further enhance the film industry as an economic force in meeting residents’ and visitors’ creative needs; and

WHEREAS, the film industry must continue to evolve by embracing equity, diversity, and inclusion as core values; and

1 WHEREAS, as the film industry cross-collaborates with all other creative industries through
2 workforce and content creation, strategic interventions in the film industry support the
3 advancement of Seattle’s creative industries and ecosystem as a whole; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2020, King County invested in developing Harbor Island Studios, a publicly-
5 accessible, large-scale film production facility that includes two soundstages; and

6 WHEREAS, in 2022, the Washington State Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law
7 House Bill 1914 that increased the State’s annual Business and Occupation Tax credit
8 limit for the Motion Picture Competitiveness Program from \$3.5 million to \$15 million;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, the film industry has brought urgency for the City to work closely with industry and
11 community stakeholders to develop pathways forward for the industry to thrive; and

12 WHEREAS, the City convened a Film Task Force in 2020 to provide recommendations for how
13 best to support and grow the local film industry and community, and the Task Force and
14 community stakeholders identified the creation of a film commission as a priority; and

15 WHEREAS, a film commission will help Seattle to support the work of and align with other
16 jurisdictions so that the region is well-positioned to maximize the benefit of the State’s
17 increased tax credit for the film industry; and

18 WHEREAS, the City Council and Mayor believe it appropriate to have a film commission to
19 advance economic development opportunities related to the film industry and strengthen
20 the value and impact of film production in our city as a dynamic force that generates
21 prosperity – both economically and culturally; NOW, THEREFORE,

22 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

1 Section 1. Section 3.14.600 of the Seattle Municipal Code, enacted by Ordinance 116457,
2 is amended as follows:

3 **3.14.600 Office established—Functions((s))**

4 There is established within the Executive Department((s)) an Office of Economic Development,
5 under the direction of the Mayor. The functions of the Office shall be as follows:

6 A. To coordinate City policies and programs to support:

- 7 1. A healthy, diversified economy,
- 8 2. Employers, both large and small,
- 9 3. Small business creation and expansion,
- 10 4. The creation and retention of livable-wage jobs in Seattle and the region,
- 11 5. Expanded employment and training opportunities, especially for low-income

12 individuals, and

13 6. The development and expansion of community-based organizations capable of
14 implementing locally supported development initiatives;

15 B. To administer the City's business loan programs, ~~((including the Neighborhood~~
16 ~~Business Development Loan Program (Ordinance 116245), Seattle Small Business Lenders~~
17 ~~Association program (Ordinances 116245 and 116341), Community Development Block Grant~~
18 ~~float loans (Ordinance 116402), Urban Development Action Grant loans, Washington State~~
19 ~~Development Loan Fund loans, Southeast Revolving Fund loans (Ordinances 109267 and~~
20 ~~113991), any other business loan programs not allocated by ordinance)) both those assigned to
21 the Office and those not assigned to another department((s)) or office((s, and any other programs
22 or projects allocated to such office by ordinance));~~

1 C. To provide staff support to the (~~Board of Directors of The City of Seattle Industrial~~
2 ~~Development Corporation~~) Seattle Music Commission and the Seattle Film Commission;

3 D. To negotiate and administer contracts with, and City funding of, organizations
4 engaged in business assistance, trade development, economic research, tourism, international
5 trade and the provision of services funded through the Neighborhood Matching Fund; and

6 E. To administer terms and conditions of contracts for transfer of commercial real estate
7 as designated by the Mayor or by ordinance.

8 Section 2. A new Chapter 3.71 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

9 **Chapter 3.71 SEATTLE FILM COMMISSION**

10 **3.71.010 Establishment**

11 There is established a Seattle Film Commission (Commission) to advise and make
12 recommendations to The City of Seattle (City) on the development of policies and programs that
13 enhance the economic development of Seattle’s film industry, including promoting the
14 sustainable growth of family-wage jobs for workers who have been historically underrepresented
15 in the industry. The goals of the Commission are to:

16 A. Inform and influence the regional film industry and community, in partnership with
17 the City, to address disparities caused by systemic racism, so that Seattle is at the forefront of
18 driving equity, diversity, inclusion, and economic prosperity; and

19 B. Advance the City’s economic development priorities in the creative economy by
20 serving as a conduit between the City and the film industry and community to attract and retain
21 local, regional, national, and global business; build inclusive career pathways into the film
22 industry; and advise on the development of efforts that reinforce and grow the role of film in the
23 region’s content and creative industries.

1 **3.71.020 Membership**

2 The Commission shall consist of 11 members representing the myriad interests of Seattle’s film
3 industry and community to offer a diverse cross-section of viewpoints that can effectively
4 address a broad array of concerns.

5 A. In making appointments, the following subgroups shall be represented:

- 6 1. On-screen talent or their representatives (Position 1);
- 7 2. Film industry labor unions (Position 2);
- 8 3. Advertising and creative agencies (Position 3);
- 9 4. Commercial producers or production companies (Position 4);
- 10 5. Film schools, film programs, or film educators (Position 5);
- 11 6. Post-production companies and personnel, such as editors, composers, and
12 post-supervisors (Position 6);
- 13 7. Film production crew, including but not limited to props, sets, wardrobe, make-
14 up, hair, camera, grip, and electric (Position 7);
- 15 8. Film festivals or film content distribution companies (Position 8);
- 16 9. Film location managers (Position 9);
- 17 10. Film organizations belonging to and advocating for communities
18 underrepresented in the film industry (Position 10); and
- 19 11. Immersive technology (such as augmented, extended, mixed, and virtual
20 reality) and emerging technology businesses (Position 11).

21 B. Positions shall be numbered 1 through 11. Members in positions 1 through 5 shall be
22 appointed by the Mayor, members in positions 6 through 10 shall be appointed by the City
23 Council, and the member in position 11 shall be appointed by the Commission after members

1 have been appointed to positions 1 through 10. All members appointed by the Mayor and the
2 Commission shall be confirmed by the City Council.

3 **3.71.030 Term**

4 A. The initial terms for positions 1, 4, 7, and 10 shall be for one year; initial terms for
5 positions 2, 5, 8, and 11 shall be for two years; and initial terms for positions 3, 6, and 9 shall be
6 for three years. All subsequent terms shall be for three years. No member shall serve more than
7 two consecutive terms.

8 B. Any vacancy in an unexpired term shall be filled in the same manner as the original
9 appointment. If a person is appointed to fill the duration of an unexpired term, then the term shall
10 count as one of the consecutive terms only if the portion of the unexpired term actually served is
11 at least one year. A member whose term is ending may continue on an interim basis as a member
12 with voting rights until such time as a successor for that position has been appointed.

13 **3.71.040 Compensation**

14 Members shall serve without pay, but members may request compensation if participating on the
15 Commission presents a financial hardship. Upon such request, the Director of the Office of
16 Economic Development is authorized to expend funds for this purpose. The compensation shall
17 be based on compensation rates commensurate with other City reimbursement processes.

18 **3.71.050 Duties**

19 The Commission shall act in an advisory capacity and have the following duties:

20 A. Meet monthly, at a minimum. In addition, it shall meet once per year with the Seattle
21 Music Commission to exchange ideas about economic development for each sector and explore
22 opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

1 B. Engage with film industry professionals to prioritize industry needs and inform the
2 development of City policies, programs, and initiatives;

3 C. Advise and assist the City in the development of efforts that support and strengthen the
4 film industry, including but not limited to:

5 1. Equity and inclusion strategies to increase access, resources, and
6 opportunities within the film industry for underrepresented groups, such as youth, people of
7 color, people with disabilities, and businesses owned by people of color;

8 2. Education, training, and workforce development strategies to grow the
9 economic impact of film production and exhibition in Seattle;

10 3. Strategies to promote Seattle as a premier location for film, television,
11 commercial, video game, animation, visual effects, emerging technology, and immersive
12 technology;

13 4. Improvements to permitting processes and regulations to facilitate film
14 production on public property;

15 5. Incentives to attract and retain film production, businesses, and jobs in
16 Seattle as a premier location for film, television, commercial, video game, animation, visual
17 effects, emerging technology, and immersive technology; and

18 6. Business support strategies to help promote growth, innovation, and wealth-
19 creation opportunities, especially for people who have historically been excluded from such
20 opportunities.

21 D. Collaborate with regional stakeholders and partners to foster alignment with King
22 County and Washington State on policies and initiatives related to the film industry.

23 **3.71.060 Organization**

1 A. Each year, by a majority vote of the Commission, at least one Commission member
2 shall be elected chairperson for a one-year term, and at least one shall be elected vice-
3 chairperson for a one-year term, who shall serve as chair in the absence of a chairperson.

4 B. The Commission shall adopt bylaws, and may establish further rules, for its own
5 procedures. Commissioners are expected to adhere to any bylaws or rules.

6 C. The Commission shall have the power to organize itself, establish committees and
7 subcommittees, and delegate duties for the performance of its work.

1 Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by the
2 Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it shall
3 take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

4 Passed by the City Council the 20th day of September, 2022,
5 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 20th day of
6 September, 2022.

7 
8 President _____ of the City Council

9 Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this 26th day of September, 2022.

10 
11 Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

12 Filed by me this 26th day of September, 2022.

13 
14 Elizabeth M. Adkisson, Interim, City Clerk

15 (Seal)