

MAKING THE MOST OF BEING NAMED A
GEORGIA CAMERA READY COMMUNITY





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WELCOME

Dear Camera Ready Community:

On behalf of the Georgia Film Office, I congratulate you on receiving your Camera Ready designation.

Camera Ready was created to establish “film-friendly” counties throughout the state, with the first 16 Georgia counties earning “Camera Ready” status in 2010 and all 159 certified in 2014. Since our office was founded in 1972, we have frequently relied on local expertise when assisting production companies looking to shoot in particular areas. After all, no one knows your community better than you do. By becoming Camera Ready, you are telling the entertainment industry that you value their business and are prepared to assist in any way possible.

Georgia has attracted film and television production due to its diverse topography, mild climate, vast and experienced network of production crew and suppliers, state-of-the-art facilities, cultural diversity and global access via Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

After the passage of the Entertainment Industry Investment Act in May 2008, Georgia catapulted into one of the top international markets for film and television production. With such production volume comes the need for a wide variety of shooting locations. So there has never been a better time to promote your community’s assets directly to the entertainment industry.

In this Camera Ready Community Toolkit you will find information on such topics as:

- Requirements for Camera Ready Liaisons
- From Script to Screen - How a Production Chooses Georgia
- How to Find Unique Shooting Locations
- Working with Local Media and Your Community

We look forward to working with you in keeping Georgia’s entertainment industry booming!

Sincerely,
Craig Dominey
Camera Ready Program Manager
Georgia Film Office



MESSAGING

Production companies value Georgia for a variety of attributes – from our diverse locations to our business-friendly environment and our talented and skilled workforce. Here are some key messages that can help you talk about the benefits of your community, Georgia and the Camera Ready program.

BENEFITS TO SHOOTING IN GEORGIA

Diverse Landscapes and Locations

Georgia offers unique and diverse landscapes including beautiful mountains, rural farmland, coastal beaches and islands, swamps and marshes, scenic rivers and lakes, small towns, major metropolitan cities and more. This enables Georgia to not only play itself but many other states, countries, time periods – even other planets!

Talented and Skilled Workforce

Georgia boasts one of the deepest and most experienced crew bases in the country. More than 30,000 Georgians are employed in the entertainment industry including on-camera talent as well as technicians and support service companies.

Production Incentives

The Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act offers an across-the-board, flat tax credit of 20 percent based on a minimum investment of \$500,000 on qualified productions or projects in Georgia. An additional 10 percent Georgia Entertainment Promotion (GEP) uplift can be earned by including an embedded animated Georgia logo on approved projects. This means that once a company spends a minimum of \$500,000 in Georgia, their qualified expenditures beyond this amount will be included as a tax credit. Additionally, this is a transferable tax credit: because many of these companies are based in other states (CA, NY), they may not have tax liability here and can sell or transfer these credits to a company based in Georgia.

Go to georgia.org/film for more information on Georgia's Entertainment Industry Investment Act.

ABOUT CAMERA READY AND INDUSTRY IMPACT ON GEORGIA

Impact on Georgia

In FY19 (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019), 399 major productions shot in Georgia, including 58 feature films and 214 TV series and specials. The entertainment industry saw a record investment in the state with more than \$2.9 billion in direct spending.

According to the Motion Picture Association of America, the motion picture and television industry is responsible for more than 92,100 jobs and nearly \$4.6 billion in total wages in Georgia, including indirect jobs and wages. Since 2010, more than 300 new businesses have relocated or expanded in Georgia to support the industry.

The film and television industry is a statewide industry, with more productions shooting in communities outside the typical production centers. Cities such as Augusta, Columbus, Tunnel Hill, Glenville, Toccoa, Albany, Valdosta, Perry and St. Marys have hosted major productions in recent years.

Camera Ready Communities

Camera Ready is a designation by the Georgia Film Office. Camera Ready Communities have in place a program that provides film and television production companies with easier, faster and better access to local resources and location information. Each community has a Camera Ready liaison in place that can assist film and television production companies on a local level. All 159 Georgia counties are now Camera Ready certified.



CAMERA READY CERTIFICATIONS

Below are the dates when each Georgia county became Camera Ready certified:

October 7, 2010: Sixteen counties received the 'Camera Ready Community' designation at the EUE/Screen Gems Studio in Atlanta. The counties include Bibb, Carroll, Chatham, Coweta, DeKalb, Dougherty, Emanuel, Floyd, Fulton, Hall, Houston, Lowndes, Morgan, Newton, Walker and Wilkes.

March 21, 2011: Seventy-three counties received the 'Camera Ready Community' designation at the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta. The counties include Appling, Baldwin, Banks, Barrow, Berrien, Bulloch, Butts, Calhoun, Camden, Candler, Chattahoochee, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coffee, Columbia, Crisp, Dawson, Decatur, Dooly, Douglas Elbert, Fannin, Fayette, Franklin, Glynn, Gordon, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hancock, Haralson, Harris, Hart, Henry, Jasper, Jeff Davis, Jenkins, Laurens, Lincoln, Lumpkin, Macon, Marion, McDuffie, Meriwether, Miller, Mitchell, Montgomery, Muscogee, Oconee, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Pulaski, Rabun, Richmond, Rockdale, Schley, Screven, Stephens, Sumter, Taliaferro, Tattnall, Taylor, Terrell, Toombs, Towns, Upson, Walton, Warren, Washington, Webster, White and Whitfield.

September 15, 2011: Twenty-three counties received the 'Camera Ready Community' designation at the Governor's Conference on Tourism in Macon. The counties include Chattooga, Catoosa, Dade, Johnson, Troup, Polk, Jackson, Liberty, Bartow, Union, Bacon, Clinch, Murray, McIntosh, Sumter, Evans, Cook, Colquitt, Spalding, Randolph, Wayne, Clarke and Putnam.

February 29, 2012: Twenty-five counties received the 'Camera Ready Community' designation at the inaugural Film Day at the Capitol including Bleckley, Brantley, Brooks, Bryan, Clay, Crawford, Dodge, Early, Forsyth, Gilmer, Grady, Lamar, Lanier, Madison, Monroe, Oglethorpe, Quitman, Seminole, Stewart, Talbot, Telfair, Thomas, Tift, Turner and Wilkinson.

March 26, 2013: Three more counties were designated at Film & Music Day at the Capitol. The counties include Greene, Ben Hill and Lee.

September 15, 2014: The final 20 counties that received the Camera Ready designation include: Atkinson, Baker, Burke, Charlton, Echols, Effingham, Glascock, Heard, Irwin, Jefferson, Jones, Long, Peach, Pierce, Treutlen, Twiggs, Ware, Wheeler, Wilcox and Worth.





ABOUT GEORGIA'S FILM INDUSTRY

GENERAL FACTS

- Georgia is one of the top filming locations in the world.
- The economic impact of entertainment industry projects handled by the Georgia Film Office in FY19 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019): \$2.9 billion in direct spending.
- Georgia hosted 399 major feature films; television movies and series; commercials; and music videos during FY19.
- The Georgia Film Academy - a collaborative effort of the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia - was recently created to support the workforce needs of the entertainment industries. The Academy certifies workforce-ready employees in needed areas, connects students and prospective employees with employers, and offers a unique capstone experience for top students providing them a path to employment in Georgia.
- Recent films shot in Georgia include *Avengers: Endgame*, *Black Panther*, *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*, *Shaft*, *Instant Family*, *The Mule*, *What Men Want*, *Baby Driver*, *A Madea Family Funeral*, *I Tonya* and *First Man*.
- A record number of television series have shot in the state including *The Walking Dead*, *Ozark*, *Dolly Parton Theater*, *Doom Patrol*, *Dynasty*, *Greenleaf*, *Macgyver*, *Star*, *Stranger Things* and *The Haunting of Hill House*.
- More than 30,000 Georgia residents are employed in the entertainment industries. Average salary is nearly \$84,000, 75 percent higher than the average salary nationwide.
- There are more than 3,000 film and television industry businesses operating in Georgia, including sound stages, camera rental houses, prop houses, costume companies and casting agencies.
- Georgia is home to entertainment companies such as Tyler Perry Studios, Turner Studios, Floyd County Productions, Swirl Films and POP Films.
- The Georgia Film Office was created in 1972 by Governor Jimmy Carter after the movie *Deliverance* shot in Rabun County, making it one of the oldest film commissions in the world.

- The state's first tax incentive, a point of purchase sales and use tax exemption, was introduced in 2002.
- The state's second and most progressive tax incentive, the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act, was signed into law by former Governor Sonny Perdue in May 2005 and updated in May 2008.

STATEWIDE IMPACT

- The number one show on television *The Walking Dead* is shot in Senoia, Georgia. Just 25 minutes south of Atlanta, the AMC show helped revitalize the community.
- Barnesville stood in for the fictional Wind Gap, Missouri, in HBO's hit miniseries *Sharp Objects*.
- Ball Ground played Mena, Arkansas, in the Tom Cruise action film *American Made*.
- *Gemini Man* starring Will Smith shot several scenes in downtown Glenville, employing locals and utilizing numerous local businesses.
- St. Marys Railroad was used for circus train scenes in the remake of Disney's *Dumbo*, while its downtown was featured in the film adaptation of Stephen King's *Doctor Sleep*.
- Toccoa was the location for six independent features and a History Channel pilot from 2016 to 2019, including *When We Last Spoke*, *County Line* and *The Legend of 5 Mile Cave*.
- Lake Allatoona is the primary location for Netflix's hit series *Ozark*, along with other locations in Cherokee and Gwinnett Counties.
- Recent Oscar nominees shot in Georgia include *Black Panther*, *Hidden Figures*, *Avengers: Infinity War*, *First Man* and *The Blind Side*.
- Georgia Power has a dedicated film location team to assist productions with shooting at their properties across the state, including power plants. Recent projects they have worked with include *First Man*, *Superintelligence* and *Macgyver*.
- According to the Savannah Regional Film Commission, more than 100 feature films and 64 television shows have been shot in the area in the past few decades including *Live by Night*, *Forrest Gump*, *Glory*, *The Conspirator*, *The Legend of Bagdad*, *The Gift*, *Forces of Nature* and *The General's Daughter*.
- Tybee Island regularly stands in for coastal locations like Miami and Los Angeles in films such as *Baywatch* and *Dirty Grandpa*, and played itself in *The Last Song* starring Miley Cyrus.
- Macon has hosted numerous major productions including *The Best of Enemies*, *The 5th Wave* and *Need for Speed*. Luther Williams Field (former minor league ballpark for the Atlanta Braves) has hosted baseball movies such as *42* and *Trouble with the Curve*.
- *X-Men: First Class* used Jekyll Island as Cuba in the finale pitting the superheroes against one another and U.S. and Russian navy ships.
- Wild Adventures amusement park in Valdosta was the location of the climactic zombie fight in *Zombieland*.
- *The Crazies* used Perry, Fort Valley, Cordele and Montezuma as stand-ins for fictional Ogden Marsh, Iowa.

- Three of Tyler Perry's made-in-Georgia films have opened at No. 1 at the box office.
- Box office hits *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof* and *Courageous* were produced by Sherwood Pictures in Albany.
- Crawfordville has been host to more than eight feature films and television movies (*Get Low*, *Sweet Home Alabama*, *The Neon Bible*, *Stars and Bars* and *The Coward of the County*).
- In 2012, Rabun County commemorated the 40th anniversary of the filming of *Deliverance*. The film is credited for giving birth to the whitewater rafting industry.
- Covington has been home to dozens of feature and television projects, including the hit TV series *The Vampire Diaries* and *In the Heat of the Night*.
- Rome hosted *Sweet Home Alabama* as well as *The Mosquito Coast*, *Remember the Titans* and *Class of 61*.
- The small town of Juliette was revitalized when *Fried Green Tomatoes* was largely shot in that community. The Whistle Stop Café still functions as a tourist attraction.

Go to exploregeorgia.org/filmography for a full list of Georgia-lensed productions.





BECOMING A CAMERA READY LIAISON

To serve as a Camera Ready Liaison, you don't necessarily need a film or television background. But it is important to be enthusiastic, have local contacts and knowledge, and be responsive!

REQUIREMENTS

We prefer that our Camera Ready Liaisons already be working for the county (or a city in the county) in an official capacity, such as with a CVB, tourism office, economic development office or city manager's office. By partnering with an "official" employee we are able to:

1. Establish connections with other city/county employees (police, fire, permitting office, etc.) who a production may need to work with, and the Liaison likely has a connection with;
2. Resolve local production issues should they arise;
3. Help productions save money by establishing attractive hotel rates and promoting local businesses; and
4. Enable a smooth transition when current Liaisons leave their positions.

By joining the Camera Ready program, your office is considered an extension of the Georgia Film Office into your community. We expect you to treat our film and television clients in a welcoming and respectful manner.

Our office only establishes one Liaison per county. This is to keep the program manageable. But this doesn't mean other interested and knowledgeable residents can't help you - in fact, we encourage such partnerships! You may wish to work with local photographers, historians or other residents to enhance your knowledge of what your county has to offer.

CAMERA READY TEAM

The Camera Ready Communities program is managed by the Georgia Film Office, a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD). GDEcD consists of several different divisions such as Tourism, International Trade and the Georgia Council for the Arts. All divisions have a similar mission - to bring jobs and economic development throughout the State of Georgia. For more information visit georgia.org.

We frequently offer workshops and seminars throughout the state on Camera Ready best practices. Announcements for future meetings are sent via email and social media.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The Georgia Film Office offers several online tools to help put your community's assets in front of film and television professionals. When you become a Liaison, your first task will be to register for access to these tools. Frequently it is the communities with an active presence in the Camera Ready Communities program that attract the most productions.

All Camera Ready Liaisons are granted access to the following:

- 1. Your county's Camera Ready page on Georgia.org** (georgia.org/cameraready); Each county has a page on the Camera Ready website to promote their locations, amenities and other information important to filmmakers. All Liaisons are responsible for updating and managing their county pages.

This website uses the same management template as our tourism website Explore Georgia (exploregorgia.org). Each Liaison is granted administrative rights to their Camera Ready pages which all have the title "(County Name) Camera Ready." If you do not currently have Explore Georgia access, it will be granted to you. Instructions on using the Explore Georgia system can be found on the resources page on the Camera Ready website.

Each Liaison is registered as the "owner" of their county page. When a Liaison change is made, the new Liaison is given ownership of the page and the old account is deleted.

Consider your Camera Ready page to be a broad overview of what your county has to offer. It is not meant to be an exhaustive film location database like the next resource on our list:

- 2. Reel-Scout** (ga.reel-scout.com); This is the Georgia Film Office's location database and a frequent first stop for filmmakers looking for places to shoot. All Camera Ready Liaisons are assigned a unique login to this system and are responsible for managing the location inventory for their specific counties. When a Liaison change is made, the new Liaison should request a new login and the old account will be deleted.

Locations are submitted by Georgia Film Office staff, Camera Ready Liaisons or the general public (georgia.org/list-your-location). The entire database is publically accessible at georgia.org/film/locations. Since Georgia Film Office staff are often not aware of changes to listed locations throughout the state (due to property sales, damage or modifications), Camera Ready Liaisons should periodically review their location inventory and make changes where appropriate, or ask the Film Office to help.

Please note the photos added to Reel-Scout do not automatically appear on the Camera Ready page on Georgia.org. For example, if you feel a local historic inn is one of your county's best assets and should be in both systems, you would use Reel-Scout for more extensive photo coverage, while the Camera Ready page should only feature one or two representative shots (the Camera Ready site only allows a maximum of ten images per county page).

- 3. Camera Ready Facebook Group** (facebook.com/groups/camerareadygeorgia/); This is an invitation-only group where announcements and news items pertaining to Camera Ready are posted. If you are active on Facebook and a new Liaison, you can request an invitation be sent to the email address you use on Facebook.

COMMUNICATION

As discussed later in this toolkit, you will frequently hear from us or location scouts when locations are being sought for a particular production. Our office keeps an email list of all Liaisons and frequently sends out group emails with location requests. Our emails are only sent to each individual Liaison, however, if you work with a team you can forward information to them unless we label details as private.

Since all Liaisons have their contact information visible on the Camera Ready website, location scouts and other film professionals can also download a contact spreadsheet and send out their own email requests. This is why it is crucial that all information be current. We encourage you to answer these requests even if they don't originate from our office, but you are welcome to check with us for additional information or verification. Over time you will likely develop relationships with local location scouts, and our office does not need to be looped in on each request. Remember that these productions are often on a time crunch to find the right place to shoot, so respond to each request as quickly as you can!





FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN

How does a film or television production company choose where to shoot? While our office works with many different types of productions, from no-budget student films to big-budget blockbusters, the path to actual production in Georgia tends to be similar. It is vital you utilize the Camera Ready tools to increase your chances of a production coming to your community. We can't promote your area if we don't know what you have!

Georgia's generous and competitive Film Tax Credit has been the catalyst for the booming film and television industry in our state. All Camera Ready Liaisons should familiarize themselves with the Tax Credit rules and regulations (see Helpful Links). Communities such as Savannah and Columbus currently offer additional incentives on top of the state incentive. But shooting locations continue to be an important deciding factor in where a production lands.

LOCATION SEARCH

In the beginning, our office typically receives an inquiry about a future production. This may come from a studio office, producer or a location scout. We may receive a screenplay, reference images or a "treatment" (a piece of prose describing the storyline and locations needed). At this time our office typically asks for additional information such as shooting dates, budget and whether they are doing a statewide location search or just specific areas. We may get additional questions about weather, crew availability and our production incentives.

If your office receives a direct inquiry, you should ask the same questions - what is the project name? Who are the filmmakers behind it? What is it about? Is it a feature film, television series, commercial or something else? What are the shoot dates and budget? Some information may not be known at this early stage or is considered confidential. But by asking such questions you will be able to judge how to approach your community and how much time your office should spend on the request. You can always acquire more information on the filmmakers via IMDB.com or general web searches, though new filmmakers may have a limited online presence.

After this initial call, our office assembles a preliminary location photo package based on the story needs. All locations in our database are tagged with keywords, so if scenes call for a swamp, abandoned warehouse, small-town square or courthouse, we can search for these locations and place them in labeled folders in the package. Once the total package is assembled, we email a private link to the

person requesting it for review online. Only our clients are sent this protected link. Camera Ready Liaisons are unable to assemble and send packages on their own.

Since our location database is public, these same clients can also do their own searches using keywords, mileage zones or other criteria. They cannot assemble a location package, however.

Georgia is a state of many diverse landscapes, but occasionally we get requests for locations that might stump our staff. That's when we turn to you – our local experts! We will send out an e-blast describing what we are looking for and ask for your recommendations. Of course, it's much easier if you've already put these locations in our location database (remember what we said about speed!). If not, we will likely ask for photos or online map links to see if the property works.

Once the location package is reviewed, the client will tell us which locations are of interest and possibly arrange an advance-scouting trip. This visit could involve just a location scout or an entire creative/executive team. Our office will contact the property owners at locations of interest and arrange site visits. We will then take the group to the sites to narrow down which locations they're interested in. Or this visit may encourage future scouting for additional options. Such advance visits may or may not require your assistance in the early stages.

While our office is often involved in these early stages, sometimes a production company will hire a freelance location scout to pull location photos from their own files, or coordinate advance visits. Sometimes these scouts will contact you directly. Please be as helpful to them as you would be to us.

What happens next after the initial inquiry or site visit varies from project to project. Sometimes things move quickly and the production sets up shop somewhere in Georgia. Other times the project is delayed, the studio chooses another state or country to film in, or the project is scrapped altogether (due to loss of funding, actor availability or other reasons). In this preliminary stage, anything can and does happen. So do your best to assist, but don't be surprised if plans suddenly change.

PRE-PRODUCTION

Hopefully, Georgia wins the project, and this is when the process accelerates rapidly. The crew is hired, locations are chosen, a production office or soundstage is booked – whatever the specific project requires. This is when you can be the most helpful, especially if you represent a community located far from production centers like Atlanta or Savannah. The visual appeal of a location may win the project for your area, but it also has to work logistically. Our clients are becoming very familiar with the Camera Ready program, and know they have a supportive contact in any county they wish to shoot in, which brings them a significant piece of mind.

The stage before actual production is called, cleverly enough, pre-production. If the chosen locations in your community require significant travel time for the crew from their homes each day, the company may choose to open a production office closer to your area. They may look into nearby office spaces and lodging options. They may need local vendors to supply specific goods and services. Or perhaps they will rent a warehouse that would work as a cover set in case it rains. Be ready to help with all of these requests if asked.

If a production company rents space in your community, inform them about your community's policies concerning business licenses and certificates of occupancy, if applicable. Also, inform the city or county offices responsible for issuing such documents that they may receive requests from a visiting production company. Remind everyone that this is only a short-term rental lasting just a few weeks or months, from pre-production through wrap. It's better for a production company to know your community's policies upfront to avoid problems when the office is already up and running.

PRODUCTION

In addition to opening an office and assembling the crew, a creative team will visit the chosen locations again on a tech scout before the actual shooting. This is where the director, production designer, director of photography and others plan out the shooting specifics such as camera angles, lighting

and so forth. Actual shooting days will be scheduled back in the office depending on factors such as weather and actor availability, which can always change. You may be asked to help obtain shooting permissions, or offer guidance on local permitting procedures if any.

Film and television shoots typically require the cooperation of other local government officials, such as the police or fire chief, city manager, DOT officials and the parks department. For example, the company may wish to close a street at a certain time, change signage on buildings or bring a large number of extras to a downtown park. Keep a list of your local officials handy and make sure it is up to date. Inform these officials that they may receive calls from production companies. Encourage them to be enthusiastic and flexible, and help the company as best they can while still looking after your community's interests. Remember that film and television production is a very expensive, high-pressure business. The easier your local officials can make it on a production company when they are planning the complicated logistics of a shoot, the better!

Production companies set up specifically for the shoot are typically formed as LLCs or similar corporations. They are created and dissolved around the dates of the shoot, which can be for several weeks, months or years (such as with a television series) at a time. So while the production might be funded and distributed by a big studio like Lionsgate or Paramount, the temporary company name may be unfamiliar to you.

In addition, these companies will typically create code names to put on directional signage pointing to set or base camp when they are on location. This is simply to keep their shoot schedule as efficient as possible without unsolicited public interference. If you ever see these signs (often a yellow sign with a strange name and an arrow pointing somewhere) and are curious what the project is, feel free to ask us.

Location contracts explaining the details of the shoot, the agreed-upon location fee, liability insurance (covered by the studio) and how any damage would be addressed (a rare problem, but covered by the studio) are entered into by the show's location manager and the property owner. If the location isn't public property, or your community does not require a general permit or application, the negotiations are often a private matter and you might not be aware a show is in town. We're happy to provide what information we have to you. A sample location agreement can be found on our website (see Helpful Links).

POST PRODUCTION

Once shooting is completed, everyone returns home and the project enters the post-production phase (editing, visual effects, etc.). Sometimes reshoots are necessary due to scheduling issues, studio reaction to early edits of the project, or other reasons. So don't be surprised if the same production returns again!

If the project is certified for the full 30 percent Georgia film tax credit, the studio often agrees to put a made-in-Georgia logo (aka the "peach logo") in the end credits or create a "making of" video for the state's marketing purposes. This system was created to encourage future production in Georgia and attract tourism from fans of the movie or television show. Often referred to as "film-induced tourism," such visitation can bring significant economic development for years to your community. Visit our Explore Georgia site for more information on film tourism in Georgia (see Helpful Links).



SHOOTING LOCATION PHOTOS

By far, the most important thing you can do as a Camera Ready Liaison to encourage local production is to identify and catalog potential filming locations. Locations are typically a deciding factor in bringing a production to your area. In assessing any potential film location a studio will consider:

- Visual appeal and how close of a match the location is to script requirements;
- How “film-friendly” the owners are;
- Cost of filming at the location and;
- Logistics of shooting and basing a crew at the location

The film and television industry is fast-moving and often expensive work. It is those counties providing information quickly that often win projects. All Camera Ready Liaisons should familiarize themselves with our film location database and consistently upload unique filming locations in advance of future requests, which are often time-sensitive. Access to the administrative backend is granted when you become Camera Ready Liaison.

What is a unique filming location, and how do you shoot it? We never know what requests are coming down the road, but you can review the document “What We Look For” in this Toolkit for a list of typical location requests to get you thinking about what’s in your area.

In addition, we have a public photo submission page where property owners can submit their own locations. You will be able to view these publically submitted locations from your county in Reel-Scout. There is a detailed guidelines page that should help you determine the type of photo coverage we need per location (see Helpful Links).

WHAT’S IN YOUR BACKYARD?

You may already have unique locations in mind for tourism purposes – historic homes, charming town squares and so on. But at times we’re also interested in the ugly, decrepit and abandoned. Closed jails, hospitals, military bases, police precincts and other places hard to film in when active are also of interest. Sometimes these are the places right under your nose that no one knows what to do with! As you get more location requests from us and other scouts, you’ll likely see a trend in the types of places we look for.

Also, think about locations you have that look like other parts of the world. Many productions shot in Georgia are not actually set in Georgia, nor the South. They are set in many different places and time periods. Do you have locations that look like they belong somewhere else? Let us know about them!

This process may seem intimidating, but if you understand the basics of proper film location coverage you only need be an amateur photographer to pique the interest of location scouts. If you truly feel you don't have the ability nor time to shoot these locations, look around for a good photographer in your community. Do you have a retired photographer, historian or student who might want to help?

When deciding which locations to concentrate on, always aim first for locations unique to you – places that cannot easily be found in production centers like Atlanta. Consider these your “first-level” locations. Once a production commits to shooting in your area, they may wish to shoot more common locations (suburban homes, shopping malls) that the script calls for, to make the best use of their time. These are your “second level” locations, which you may find easier to search for once you have landed a project.

Remember your photos are only meant to entice potential scouts with a general overview of what the property has to offer. Each film or television director will have unique ideas on how they want the property shot. Location scouts hired by the productions will shoot their own photos of a particular property, based on the requirements of the specific shows they are working on. But it is important to have enough coverage to pique interest.

You may wish to put out a public call for property owners interested in listing their sites, using our public submission link. Some communities have spread the word via social media or the local newspaper. Any locations we receive through this link will automatically be grouped under your county, so you can log in to Reel-Scout at any time to see what has been submitted. If the property owner did not follow the guidelines, we likely will not accept the listing.

Using our Reel-Scout location database is pretty self-explanatory, however, if you get lost you can use the “Help” tab for comprehensive tutorials. You will see it in the left menu once you log in to Reel-Scout. Our office staff can also guide you.

You will find you can enter more than just photos in the database. You can also enter the location address, keywords, helpful notes, site condition information, required permits (if any) and points of contact. We ask that you make any points of contact the property owners themselves and not the Camera Ready office unless the property owners have specifically requested you handle all filming inquiries.

BE FILM-FRIENDLY

Any locations submitted to us must be “film-friendly,” meaning the owners are at least willing to consider filming on their property. This does not mean they have to accept every film or television project. Some property owners may not care for certain genres or budgets, not want any interior filming, or have other stipulations. We encourage you, or the property owners, to include these conditions with the listing so we don't waste the client's time, nor theirs. The “usage restriction” field with each listing is helpful for this.

The Georgia Film Office does not issue filming permits. Historically, film permits have not been required for shooting on private property unless public property is utilized (such as nearby roads or parking lots for crew vehicles). Several municipalities have recently created film permits and guidelines, and we keep an updated list on our website (see Helpful Links). You can research comparable communities if there's local interest in creating similar guidelines.

Whether you adopt filming ordinances or guidelines is up to your community – they are not required, and in some communities may be deemed unnecessary. If you have ordinances in place, be aware of any changes on the city or county level and inform us if our permits page needs to be changed.

You may be asked by a property owner how much they should charge for a film or television shoot. None of us should make any specific recommendations as the actual location fees can vary between projects based on budgets and specific filming needs. We don't want to negatively impact negotiations for either party. We have several helpful documents in our Resource Library (see Helpful Links) for property owners including standard location agreements. Some city, county, state or federally owned locations have set fees for their properties, and they are spelled out in the documents on our Permits page.

When thinking of potential filming locations, also consider the logistics of shooting there. Imagine a large film company arriving with trucks, cabling and equipment. Would they be able to easily access the property? When they record sound, is there significant noise nearby? Is there parking on-site, or a large base camp near the location where they can park their trucks and crew? You can list this information per location in the database. Be frank about any restrictions or issues a production company might face. You may be surprised how production can creatively work around certain issues.

When consulting with a production company about shooting specific scenes in your community, don't be afraid to ask questions. For example, how will all the production trucks and extras impact traffic downtown? Will there be a lot of lights and noise at night you should inform citizens about? Where will all the trash go? It's your community, and the more facts you have the better you can serve both the production company and your citizens. Some shooting requests may be unreasonable, and it's fine to say so, but hear the company out and remember to be as flexible as you can. Also, remember that even the most carefully planned shoots can and do change without warning (weather delays, actors getting sick, etc.).

Finally, make sure to regularly manage your location inventory in the database. Check to see if photos are outdated, contacts have changed or locations are no longer available. The last thing we want is to get a director interested in a property, only to find out the site has drastically changed, or can't actually be used. Any property currently in the system we assume is film-friendly unless we hear otherwise.





WHAT WE LOOK FOR

The Georgia Film Office receives a wide variety of location requests each year for many different kinds of projects. Film and television producers may wish to shoot in Georgia because of the state's beauty, or they are trying to match a location from another part of the world. Since more projects are shooting in their entirety in Georgia, there is a greater need to find many different types of locations, both scenic and practical, unique and right under your nose. Below is a list of the typical locations we look for. It is not meant to be a final list, just something to get you thinking about what might be in your community.

1. Towns, main streets, town squares

2. Residential districts, especially period ones (19th and early 20th century)

3. Anything closed, or partially used

- Prisons
- Hospitals
- Institutions
- Schools (especially period)

4. Interesting geographic areas

- Quarries
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Creeks/streams
- Meadows (without houses/lines/towers)
- Mines
- Gorges
- Waterfalls
- Mountain tops with vistas
- Fields of crops or orchards

5. Homes

- Mansions (all architectural styles - period is always better)
- Antebellum mansions

- Victorian homes on acreage

- Period homes on lakes or Rivers

- "Shacks"

- Mill houses

- Farms/barns

- Low end farm houses

- Two story farm houses

- Row houses

- Decrepit homes on property

6. Factories

- Mills

- Large manufacturing plants
(one could shoot in)

- Closed plants

- Cotton Gins

- Old water wheels

7. Roads (car commercials)

- Country roads (no lines)

- Old bridges

- Curvy mountain roads

- Roads through wild flower fields

- Roads through row crops or orchards

- Roads through expansive flat lands



SHOOTING IN DISTANT LOCATIONS

As unique as your filming locations may be, another deciding factor for any good producer is how difficult or expensive it will be to get a crew to set every day.

Production work can be exciting and creative, but also frequently involves very long hours, significant stress, and quick decisions potentially worth many thousands of dollars to the studio. Working hours and conditions in a “traditional job” typically don’t apply. It’s not unusual for a crew to work 14 hour days or longer, often at night. So it’s important a crew be well rested and sharp each day.

Visiting film crews are often compared to the circus coming to town. Think of the large equipment trucks, catering, set construction, hundreds of crew members and extras – and the expense of getting them to a location. You can then understand why producers, whose job it is to deliver film shoots on time and on budget, are very cost-conscious when considering where to shoot.

In Georgia, the two main production centers where most crew members live, and production vendors are based, are currently Atlanta and Savannah. If your community is too far from either city for crew members to safely drive to/from set each day, or there are not enough experienced local crew members to qualify as “local hires,” the production company will often provide visiting crew a living allowance for the duration of the shoot. Producers will also need to consider the cost of bringing supplies, equipment and vehicles to your area. These are important considerations whether the production is union signatory or non-union.

While Georgia is a right-to-work state - meaning both union and non-union members can be hired - it does have a significant film union presence through IATSE, Teamsters and the various Guilds. Many film or television productions from a major studio will already be union signatory shows. Unions have specific rules for what defines a “production center” for their members, and when a production company must offer their crew a living allowance. Sometimes producers negotiate this exact zone with the unions based on the specifics of their shows. Links to the various union offices can be found on our website (see Helpful Links).

While these restrictions may seem to take many communities out of the running, the fact is the two production centers cannot, and do not, host all production happening in the State of Georgia:

1. Consider the heavy volume of production occurring today in the state and the variety of shooting locations needed. We receive requests for every imaginable location type and time period. No one region can creatively accommodate every location request. These days more productions are willing to travel to locations that are truly unique.
2. Our office also assists photo shoots, commercials, television docuseries and other productions with a smaller footprint that can more easily travel to remote locations. While they may not grab headlines, they often have healthy production budgets and can have a significant local economic impact.
3. While you may not host an entire film shoot, even hosting a few shooting days can have a significant local economic impact. Some productions travel to unique and remote locations for a few days then film more generic locations (like house or office interiors) closer to the production centers.

So what can you do to attract production, even if you're far away from the production centers?

- Shooting locations: Take inventory of the unique shooting locations you have. The further away you are, the more you should prioritize locations that can't easily be found near the production centers. More generic locations can be found, if needed, once your unique locations have attracted a production to your area. Upload these locations on a regular basis to the state database (Reel-Scout).
- Lodging: Where could crew members stay in your area? What different levels of lodging are in your area or nearby?
 1. Another couple of industry terms you may hear are "above the line" and "below the line." Imagine a crew list of everyone working on a production with a single dividing line drawn through it. People "above the line" are typically the executive or creative team: showrunners, producers, directors, writers and actors. Those "below the line" are the actual crew members and support team.
 2. "Above the line" workers typically demand a higher level of accommodation (their contracts often require this). If you don't have a luxury hotel nearby, do you have a resort? Perhaps some higher-income personal homes for rent?
 3. "Below the line" workers might stay in the local chain hotels, but if you're short on those you might have other ideas where they could stay. You should also work with your local hotel operators to establish attractive rates for visiting crew. This helps producers absorb less cost for shooting in your area.
- Work with your neighboring Liaisons: Do you have the needed shooting locations but not the lodging, or vice versa? Work with your neighbors to present the most attractive regional package to a production company. Visit the Camera Ready website for the names of your neighboring Liaisons if you don't know them.
- Vendors: If you're located far from the production centers, it might be more cost-effective for productions to hire local vendors or buy local supplies instead of bringing everything in from elsewhere. While you can't be expected to already have established film vendors in your area, there's often someone locally who can provide production services, sometimes in areas you might not expect. For example - an antique dealer who could provide props? Local restaurants for catering? A Home Depot or Lowes where lumber for set construction could be purchased? Maybe a local printer who could print signs and banners for the art department?

Take time to look through our Georgia Production Directory (see Helpful Links) and find out which vendors typically work with the film and television industries. Encourage similar local vendors to list in the directory, as producers can also search this directory by city or county. You can also keep your own vendor list to present to producers upon arrival. Also, make sure any businesses you recommend are willing and able to handle the volume of work a production may require.



WORKING WITH MEDIA AND LOCAL CITIZENS

Attracting a production to your community is undeniably exciting news. We all want to promote your community's success in bringing such projects to your area. But we also have to follow certain guidelines when it comes to media exposure and information released to the community. We all want to be good hosts for visiting productions, while also serving our citizens.

Most production companies are aware there will be heightened public interest in their shoot. As discussed earlier, the producer's job is to deliver the shoot on time and on budget, and in such a pressure cooker environment they try to keep unsolicited public interference to a minimum.

We all understand in this age of fast-moving news, omnipresent cameras and social media it's difficult to keep a lid on such a conspicuous industry. But the guidelines below should help you to be the best host you can be:

- When you hear of a potential project scouting your community, resist informing the local media. Production companies generally wish to keep their projects confidential when they are in the development stage. You also do not want to raise local expectations. Most of the time, a movie or television show is scouting numerous locations besides yours, and may not choose your community in the end.
- When a production has committed to shooting in your community, one of your first tasks should be to find out if they've hired a publicist to handle media inquiries. Find out who that person is, especially if you've been working closely with the location manager or others. The publicist should be notified of any interview requests. He or she may be fine with releasing certain information, or want nothing released. It's better to ask first so you're covered! If the show is too small to have a publicist, just ask the person in authority what information you can release.
- Avoid publishing confidential information and "behind the scenes" photos on social media during production, unless the company has no issues or wishes to partner with you – again, ask before you do it. This also includes sharing/liking such posts from others outside your office. Studios often do not want unauthorized production details leaked in advance. Once a project is wrapped and ready for release, it's fine to brag about your experience!

- When a production shot in your community is about to be released, the media may wish to know what the specific shooting locations were. Public locations are generally fine to reveal, but be cautious about private property. Homeowners especially may not wish for their addresses to be published.
- Contact the Georgia Film Office if you need guidance on how to answer a media request. We have a communications team that works regularly with local, national and international media.
- Once news spreads that a production is in town, citizens may reach out asking about job opportunities. Locals are often used as extras, so you can offer to work with the production to get the word out if/when extras are needed, or about any other positions the company might need to be filled locally. General calls for crew and extras are also published on the Georgia Film Office's Help Wanted Hotline (see Helpful Links). The Hotline contains all of the contact information the production companies allow to be released. We never release additional production office information nor contact information for any show staff, and you shouldn't either.
- No matter how wonderful an experience that a film or television shoot might be, you should still be prepared for the occasional complaint from local business owners, citizens and others who feel inconvenienced. Address their concerns, but also remind everyone that the shoot is only temporary and is having a positive impact on your community.
- In some instances, a production may have a run-in with local citizens, businesses or government entities, or make an unusual shooting request. You may be asked to intervene in such cases on behalf of one side or the other. This is where your connections with local officials as part of your everyday job will be helpful. Use your best judgment in how best to resolve the matter. Remember that while you're trying to be a good host, you also must safeguard the community you work for.





ECONOMIC IMPACT

As exciting as hosting a production can be, the local economic impact for your community really makes your efforts worthwhile. Visiting production companies can spend thousands of dollars locally on everything from hotels and supplies to food, fuel, car rentals and many other production expenses.

Make sure the production company knows about the support services in your community. Point them toward the Georgia Production Directory, or keep your own handy list. Review the Georgia Production Directory if you're just getting started learning about what types of businesses a typical production utilizes. When a production isn't in town, you may wish to hold local business mixers to keep the community energized and establish a local network.

It can be a challenge to find out how much a production company spent in your community during their shoot, and on what. To receive their state tax credit, production companies are required to fill out the Georgia Expenditures Form found on our Film Incentives page (see Helpful Links). But they only provide combined statewide numbers, so the Georgia Film Office has no way of knowing, for example, how many hotel room nights were in one community versus another.

There are ways you can acquire at least some of this information, especially if you know a production has spent a good deal of time in your community:

1. If you've been especially helpful to a production, ask their location manager (or whoever you've been in regular contact with) if they can help you acquire some expenditure numbers. In some cases, they may be able to at least get ballpark figures from their accounting department. While they are not obligated to provide private company information, it doesn't hurt to ask. Especially for a returning show, you can make the case you want your community to be excited about how much local economic impact the show had!
2. Establish communication with local vendors who work with the film and television industry, and find out from them how much a production spent. For example, if you know of a local hotel the crew stayed in during the shoot, ask the manager how many room nights and what they spent. Same for the local restaurant that provided catering. Encourage businesses to share this information with you, perhaps through periodic business mixers or just simple phone calls.

3. The Georgia Film Office often receives vendor lists from completed shows. These contain contact information for businesses utilized during production. If you have a question about whether a particular vendor was used in your community, we may be able to look it up.

Significant economic impact can also come from international tourists visiting your community because it hosted their favorite film or television show. Of course, such tourism is not guaranteed, but communities like Senoia (AMC's *The Walking Dead*), Covington (CW's *The Vampire Diaries*) and Savannah (*Forrest Gump*) have seen an influx of tourists inspired by movies and television shows shot there. Movie tour companies have also appeared in Georgia, bringing tourists to such communities as part of specially curated tours.

This special tourism segment is known as “film-induced tourism,” and has become so popular that the Georgia Film Office has created its own tourism website on Explore Georgia to guide visitors to particular sites (see Helpful Links). There are self-guided tours, contests, release schedules, filmographies and other information for film and television fans. When these fans visit your community, they spend money on hotels, restaurants, gifts and other items for an untold number of years to come!

When a show filmed in your community is about to be released, market yourself! Some communities have created special websites or social media accounts revolving around the show. Barnesville, for example, created a Wind Gap, Missouri Facebook group (the fictional town they played in HBO's *Sharp Objects*) knowing that viewers would likely search for the town. If you've acquired “behind the scenes” photos or videos from the production, now is the time to use them. Perhaps make your own videos with local residents/businesses involved with the production. Talk about your experiences with local media. In short, take advantage of your moment in the spotlight!

BY THE NUMBERS

Shoot date: Feb 26 - April 12, 2018

Georgia Spend:
\$26,583,087

Georgia Crew Hired:
400

Georgia Cast/Extras Hired:
215

Hardware/Lumber/Supplies Spend:
\$1,289,230

Transportation/Truck Rental Spend:
\$748,608

Catering, Other Food Spend:
\$452,670

Lodging (room nights):
25,123

GEMINI MAN
Release date: Oct 4, 2019

MORE THAN 330 VENDORS EMPLOYED – THESE VENDORS ARE BASED IN 64 CITIES ACROSS THE STATE:

Alpharetta	Decatur	Madison	Roswell
Athens	Doraville	Marietta	St. Simons Island
Atlanta	Duluth	Martinez	Savannah
Auburn	Ellenwood	McDonough	Senoia
Baxley	Fayetteville	Meridian	Statesboro
Bloomington	Gainesville	Nahunta	Stockbridge
Brooklet	Garden City	Norcross	Sylvania
Brunswick	Glennville	Palmetto	Thunderbolt
Carrollton	Hagan	Peachtree City	Townsend
Chamblee	Hinesville	Pembroke	Tucker
Clermont	Jonesboro	Pooler	Tybee Island
Collins	Kennesaw	Powder Springs	Union City
Crescent	Lawrenceville	Reidsville	Vinings
Cumming	Ludowici	Rex	Waco
Darien	Mableton	Richmond Hill	Waycross
Dawsonville	Macon	Rincon	Woodstock

Georgia USA

One example of how a single film production impacts the entire state.



HELPFUL LINKS

Georgia Film Office

georgia.org/film

Film Tax Incentive

georgia.org/industries/film-entertainment/georgia-film-tv-production/production-incentives

Film Permits

georgia.org/industries/film-entertainment/georgia-film-tv-production/permits

Explore Georgia (Film Tourism)

exploregorgia.org/film

Georgia Camera Ready Communities

georgia.org/cameraready

Film Location Database

georgia.org/film/locations

List Your Property as a Film Location (Public Location Submission)

georgia.org/list-your-location

Georgia Production Directory

georgia.org/reel-crew

Help Wanted Hotline

georgia.org/help-wanted

FAQs and Industry Resources (including film/TV union chapters)

georgia.org/industries/film-entertainment/georgia-film-tv-production/resources-frequently-asked-questions