

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FILM, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY REPORT and ORDINANCE FIRST CONSIDERATION relative to the establishment of a free Micro-Shoot Permit for any public-space filming activity.

Recommendations for Council action, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE MAYOR:

1. PRESENT and ADOPT the accompanying ORDINANCE dated October 7, 2026 amending Subsections (a) and (b) of Section 41.20 and Subsection (a) of Section 41.20, and adding Subsection (f) to Section 41.20.1 of Article 1, Chapter IV of the Los Angeles Municipal Code to establish a no-fee permit for Micro-shoot film activities.
2. INSTRUCT the Board of Public Works (BPW), in coordination with the Los Angeles Fire Department, Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Department of Transportation, and Department of Recreation and Parks, and with assistance from FilmLA, to report within 60 days on a plan to modify and implement the Micro-Shoot Permit Program modeled after the New York City “Letter and Lieu Permit” system.
3. RECEIVE and FILE the August 6, 2026 BPW report.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None submitted by the City Attorney nor the BPW. Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: Yes

For:

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council
NoHo Neighborhood Council
Los Feliz Neighborhood Council

Summary:

On October 16, 2026, your Committee considered an August 6, 2026 BPW and October 8, 2026 City Attorney reports and Ordinance relative to the establishment of a free Micro-Shoot Permit for any public-space filming activity. According to the BPW, it has been suggested that the recently established (as of April 2026) FilmLA Low Impact Permit Pilot Program be used as the primary framework for evaluating new permit categories before implementing any additional tiers such as the micro-shoot program envisioned in this Motion. The Low Impact Permit Pilot will run for six months, with a three-month evaluation to assess usage, impacts, and lessons learned before broader recommendations are made on other permit tiers.

On March 4, 2026, Council requested the City Attorney to prepare and present an Ordinance establishing a free Micro-Shoot Permit, required for any public-space filming activity meeting all of the following criteria:

- Involves no more than 10 people on site
- Uses only handheld cameras, smartphones, small tripods, or similar lightweight equipment
- Does not block more than half of any sidewalk, maintains ADA access, and does not restrict public use
- Uses no generators, lighting units over 25 pounds, C-stands, dollies, or amplified sound
- Does not require parking removal, traffic control, or exclusive use of the public right-of-way
- Does not involve drones, pyrotechnics, simulated weapons, hazardous activities, or special effects

Responses from various partner agencies are listed below and can be used as feedback for the ultimate establishment of a Free Micro-Shoot Filming Permit.

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) finds the proposal feasible from both a community impact and public safety standpoint; however, more clearly defined constraints are necessary to ensure effective implementation. As referenced in the Motion, the New York City model provides a useful framework. Their system includes a streamlined “Letter in Lieu of Permit,” accessible via a dropdown menu, which outlines specific conditions for filming on public property. While the Motion appropriately avoids overloading the initial proposal with detailed regulations, several key public safety and community impact considerations remain unaddressed. These include, for example, restrictions on the use of police uniforms by talent and the depiction of simulated criminal activity, both of which can generate public concern and unnecessary law enforcement response.

Adapting the language and structure of New York City’s “Letter in Lieu of Permit” to align with Los Angeles’ infrastructure and operational needs would provide a strong foundation. This approach would help ensure public safety and minimize community disruption while still advancing the goal of maintaining Los Angeles as a film-friendly city.

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) has been working on permitting language. Safety is not expected to be a factor when FilmLA does its initial screening, and finds that safety could be jeopardized as outlined in the parameters of the permit. Should this occur, it would disqualify the production from the low impact permit.

FilmLA agrees with LAPD's response overall. A "free micro-shoot filming permit" will require some level of coordination to ensure compliance and manage public reaction if productions are allowed to operate under more permissive rules without clear safeguards. Any free-permit or minimal-requirement structure raises questions about City liability, insurance requirements, administrative oversight and coordination. The "Letter in Lieu of Permit" approach may help avoid some of these issues. If productions can apply for City permission to film and be subject to few or no approvals, the City still bears risk, and these issues are not adequately addressed in the motion language. The Ordinance to be drafted by the City Attorney should reflect not only a desire to support filming, but also the need to maintain balance, transparency, and realistic operational guardrails. Any new program must consider what happens when productions misrepresent their activities and whether there should be consequences or other mechanisms to encourage compliance. Neighborhoods already question the level of access productions receive. Eliminating permit costs for productions with visible neighborhood impact could intensify complaints. From a community perspective, even productions with relatively small footprints can still create significant disruption. Responding to community filming complaints requires ongoing investment of time by City and FilmLA staff. Accordingly, cost recovery should remain a consideration. Finally, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) does not have concerns with the intent of this permitting process.

After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the Ordinance as well as to receive and file the August 6, 2026 BPW report, and additionally instruct the BPW to report as detailed above in Recommendation No. 2. This matter is now forwarded to Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ad Hoc Committee on Film, Entertainment, and Creative Industry

COUNCILMEMBER VOTE

NAZARIAN:	YES
PARK:	YES
PADILLA:	YES

ARL
10/16/26

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-