



## Guidelines for Commercial Film and Other Media Productions on City of Suwanee Public Property

As it would any industry that enhances its economic development landscape, the City of Suwanee welcomes the film industry to the community and looks forward to working cooperatively with industry professionals. While these guidelines are written primarily for commercial film productions (including television programs, motion pictures, documentaries, commercials, etc.), they also may be applied to other commercial media productions, including radio broadcasts and photo shoots.

Generally, the City of Suwanee practices a philosophy of openness in regard to accessibility to its parks, City Hall, and other public facilities. That is, we prefer to encourage access and use while limiting rules and restrictions. That being said, use of Suwanee public facilities by the film industry requires some City oversight in order to protect interests of residents and businesses, ensuring their accessibility to public facilities and minimizing potential inconveniences. In addition, the City wishes to safeguard Suwanee's brand and reputation.

Film production applications will be evaluated using several criteria, including, but not limited to: impact on facilities and the community, reasonableness of the request, dates of request and whether they conflict with previously scheduled community events, artistic merit, good-standing of production company, impact on the City's brand/reputation, and special circumstances of requests (such as use of vehicle chases, animals, or nudity).

For the purposes of these guidelines, film production projects have been divided into two categories.

### Low-Impact Projects

These productions meet **all** of the following conditions:

- require minimal filming equipment and minimal disruption of normal business activities

- allow for uninterrupted vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow
- do not require closure or partial closure of any public facility (e.g., City Hall, park, street, or sidewalk)
- limit filming at an indoor public facility to 30 minutes and at an outdoor public facility to 60 minutes; do not restrict the public from access to said facility
- do not require City staff support (in the form of off-duty police officers or public works/sanitation/facilities access support)
- do not require alteration in any way of City of Suwanee buildings, facilities, signage, vegetation, etc.

To foster an environment of open communication, the City of Suwanee requests that productions that fit within the parameters above complete the City of Suwanee Film Production Permit Application and submit the completed application three days in advance of filming. No permit fee will be assessed. Applications will be reviewed and permits issued by the City of Suwanee’s public information officer.

### **High-Impact Projects**

This category includes productions that fit **one or more** of the following conditions:

- require closure of or restrict access by the public in any way to public facilities, including City Hall, City parks, sidewalks, streets, rights-of-way, etc.
- time for filming is longer than 30 minutes at indoor public facilities and longer than 60 minutes at outdoor public facilities
- require aerial filming
- require more than one business day (e.g., 8 consecutive hours) for on-location production or filming between the hours of 10 pm-8 am
- make use of amplified sound, simulated weapons, live animals, stunts, smoke/fire/pyrotechnics, explosives, vehicle chases/crashes, or nudity
- make use of locations that include the City of Suwanee logo or name in a manner that is more than “in passing”; feature the City of Suwanee logo/brand as part of the storyline
- will alter, replace, or use vegetation, signage (temporary or otherwise), ornamental decorations, or amenities at public facilities/areas
- require significant assistance from City of Suwanee staff (for closures, security, facilities access, research, contacts, etc.)

Productions that fit within these parameters must submit:

1. a completed City of Suwanee Film Production Permit Application
2. the required \$50 application fee (an additional \$250 fee plus fees for special requests – e.g., use of public facilities, closed roads, etc. – will be charged for approved applications)
3. a site plan/map indicating production location(s) and base camp location
4. proof of liability insurance (\$1 million minimum) naming the City of Suwanee as an additional insured

Applications will be reviewed by the public information officer and city manager. Additional fees shall be assessed, depending upon closures and other special uses requested, duration of filming, and staff support needed.

### **Guidelines for all film and commercial media productions**

- To ensure the best support from the City of Suwanee and to foster an environment of open communication, a Commercial Film/Media Production Permit Application for low-impact projects is requested and shall be received by the public information officer at least three (3) business days in advance of production. Applications for high-impact projects shall be received at least seven (7) business days in advance; requests for road closures may require 14 days or more.
- Applications are available online at [suwanee.com](http://suwanee.com). Applications may be submitted via email to Bonnie Simmon, [BSimmons@suwanee.com](mailto:BSimmons@suwanee.com).
- The City reserves the right to ask productions that do not have the appropriate permit or are violating guidelines to leave public areas and/or to charge them a fee that is double the usual cost for unanticipated/non-permitted high-impact activities.
- Production company is responsible for obtaining permission of local business and residential property owners for filming on private property not owned or controlled by the City of Suwanee.
- When filming on private property, applicant is strongly encouraged to notify surrounding residents/businesses no later than 48 hours before filming.
- The film production company may not block, delay, or interrupt normal activity on public property unless advance permission has been granted through the permit process.
- If more than six (6) car-sized vehicles are needed for production crew, staff, extras, support, catering, etc., an additional on-street daily parking fee may be charged.
- The Suwanee police chief must review and approve requests for street closures or to block or disrupt traffic. Off-duty City of Suwanee police officers shall be used to manage closures (street, parks, etc.) as well as vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The police chief or a designee will determine necessary assignments as well as service fee to be charged to filmmakers, based on a rate of \$40/hour per officer with at least two officers anticipated for a minimum of four hours. To arrange police traffic/road closure support or location security, contact the police department's administrative services bureau captain at 770/945-8995.

- Suwanee public works staff members can provide support in the form of assisting with closures, installing barricades, clean-up, restroom attendants, and after-hours facility access. The fee for such services is \$30/hour/staff member.
- Removal, cutting, trimming, or alteration of plants and other vegetation in public areas and rights-of-way is prohibited unless specifically approved by the permit.
- The use, addition, or alteration of City of Suwanee signage, logo, or identifiable locations (e.g., City Hall) shall be approved in advance. Film production company may be required to complete Suwanee's temporary signage permit and provide any required fees. The City of Suwanee logo and identifiable facilities should not be used in a manner that may be perceived as obviously negative or obscene. Nothing herein shall be construed as to grant a license, temporary or otherwise, for the City's logo or any accompanying marks or signage.
- Film activities shall not begin before 8 a.m. and must be completed by 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, unless approved in advance.
- For high-impact projects, the production company shall provide a certificate of insurance naming "City of Suwanee, its officials, agents, and employees" as additional insureds. The film company shall provide insurance for a minimum of \$1 million in comprehensive general liability and workers compensation. In addition, the company shall agree to waive any claims against the City of Suwanee for fees or damages caused by or in any way connected to exercise of approved film permit and shall hold harmless and indemnify the City for any claims, injuries, or causes of action asserted against the City that do not arise from the City's negligence.
- Use of gunfire, blank fire, or pyrotechnics; high-speed vehicles; bull horns, sirens, public address systems, or other amplified sound; or wild animals requires written consent from the chief of police or a designee.
- Any film activity that includes use of explosives, pyrotechnics, fire, smoke-making machines, or other special effects shall be approved by the Gwinnett County Fire Marshal, [firemarshal@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:firemarshal@gwinnettcountry.com) or 678/518-4980.
- In City of Suwanee parks, no motorized vehicles are permitted on sidewalks or in natural areas without prior consent. In addition, no stakes may be used nor may any "amenities" – including, but not limited to, trees, play equipment, holiday decorations, pavilions, fountains, public art – be moved, altered, or damaged.
- Upon completion of filming, all materials and debris must be cleaned up and removed and location shall be left in a condition that is satisfactory to the public works supervisor. Any costs for clean-up and/or damage repair deemed necessary and undertaken by the

City will be charged against the sanitation deposit; additional charges (including public works staff time) shall be billed to the film production company if necessary.

- Once a high-impact permit has been granted, the City requests a production calendar prior to filming.
- We encourage and appreciate use of City of Suwanee restaurants and retail businesses by production crews.
- The City of Suwanee reserves the right to deny any and all applications at its sole discretion. The City reserves the right to revoke or withdraw a permit for violation of guidelines or unforeseen circumstances.
- These guidelines are subject to change and may be tailored to fit specific production needs and situations.

### Film Production Fees

- Application fee - \$50
- Approved permit for high-impact projects - \$250
- Use of park or other City facility for high-impact projects - \$500/day
- **Use and closure** of park or other City facility - \$1,000/day
- Street closure inconvenience fee - \$500/day
- On-street parking fee (if more than six (6) car-sized vehicles to be used) - \$100/day
- Change fee (required for changes in venue, staff needs, etc. with less than 72 hours' notice) - \$250
- Penalty fee for lack of appropriate permit - \$500 plus double usage charges
- Refundable sanitation/property depreciation fee - \$500
- \$40/hour for police officers if required for street closures, traffic direction, security – minimum of two officers for four hours each
- \$30/hour per staff member for public works support (setting up closures or barricades, clean-up, restroom attendants, after-hours facility access, on-site support)

The \$50 nonrefundable application fee is due at time application is submitted. All other payments, including the \$500 sanitation/depreciation fee, as well as proof of insurance/rider naming City of Suwanee as an additional insured are due before filming begins. Checks should be made payable to:

**City of Suwanee**  
ATTN Bonnie Simmons  
330 Town Center Ave.  
Suwanee, GA 30024