

# GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL FILM POLICY

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90 Welsford Street  
Shepparton,  
Victoria, Australia 3630



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### GREATER SHEPPARTON

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Greater Shepparton, situated in the heart of the Goulburn Valley, covers an area of 2,421 square kilometres and is the fourth largest provincial centre in Victoria. The major urban centre of Shepparton is located at the confluence of the Goulburn and Broken Rivers and at the intersection of the Goulburn Valley and Midland Highways.

Greater Shepparton has a well developed economy, largely due to its strong agricultural and irrigation base.

The Goulburn Valley is often referred to as the “Food Bowl of Australia” as around 25 per cent of the total value of Victoria’s agricultural production is generated in this area. Dairying and fruit growing are the major primary industries, with the viticulture and tomato industries also showing huge growth.

The appeal of Greater Shepparton is its varied landscapes and heritage locations, and their ability to double for a number of iconic settings from around the world. The meandering waterways of the Broken and Goulburn Rivers, the orchards with neat rows of fruit trees – bare in winter, blossoming in spring and bearing fruit in the summer provide just some of the contrasts of the region. The smaller towns of Dookie, Murchison, Tatura, Mooropna and Tallygaroopna encompass the hospitality and uniqueness of provincial diversity, from the progressive and vibrant natural features of Dookie to the character and charm of Murchison making Greater Shepparton the ideal setting for any film, television or photographic project.

#### Vision

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To increase Greater Shepparton’s profile as a desirable production destination, to advocate and facilitate filming activity in the region, and to generate greater economic benefits for Greater Shepparton while maintaining

community amenities.

#### Background

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Interest in Victoria as a location for production and post-production of films, television programs and commercials has increased dramatically in recent years. This is due to a greater awareness of the state’s spectacular and diverse locations, the availability of attractive federal and state-based financial incentives, the comparatively low value of the Australian dollar against the US dollar, the opening of a major studio facility in Melbourne and Film Victoria’s promotion of the State as a film-friendly production destination.

Greater Shepparton recognises the need for a coordinated approach across local government to address increased demand from the local, interstate and international film production industry, and has committed to promoting and facilitating greater access to its locations.

The film and television industry can generate revenue for hospitality, travel and other local industries. A powerful secondary impact of films, television programs and commercials is the promotion of the region and the stimulation of tourism and investment.

#### Scope of Policy

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This policy covers all areas of the municipality of Greater Shepparton, to coordinate filming activity occurring on land under its care and management.

This policy introduces a framework within which applications for filming and still photography will be reviewed and processed. The policy allows all stakeholders (including local government, public authorities, the community, producers and production companies) to understand precisely their commitments and expectations when filming in Greater Shepparton. The policy provides the requirements for filming and still

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photography in Greater Shepparton and is intended to apply to the following activities:

- Motion picture photography for television
- Feature films
- Documentaries
- Music videos

Any omissions to the range of activities above should be viewed as an implicit exclusion to this policy.

### Strategies

Greater Shepparton City Council's Film Policy will achieve its vision by implementing the following strategies:

- Implement, monitor and maintain an efficient and effective process for using Greater Shepparton for film purposes
- Provide guidelines for a coordinated information and permit approval service for the film and television industry
- Ensure the film and television industry adheres to the policy and guidelines
- Provide a high level of service with efficient responses to film and television industry enquiries and film permit applications
- Develop and maintain systems for a streamlined approach to the provision of information and service requests from the film and television industry
- Monitor the level of film activity to minimise impacts on community amenity, both residential and business
- Facilitate and monitor the notification of filming activity to residents, business operators and the relevant public authorities
- Act as an advocate for the film and television industry within council, to the community and in dealings with relevant public authorities
- Act as a mediator in the resolution of issues arising from filming activity, if necessary

- Actively work with key government agencies, including Film Victoria, to effectively advocate and promote Greater Shepparton as a film-friendly production destination with diverse and accessible locations.

### Outcomes

These strategies will result in a number of positive outcomes for the film and television industry, Greater Shepparton and the community including:

- A balance between residential, business and film and television industry needs and interests
- Streamlined promotion of and access to Greater Shepparton for the film and television industry
- Recognition of Greater Shepparton as a film friendly and premier filming location in Victoria
- An increase in film and television productions using Greater Shepparton as a location
- An enhanced reputation and profile for Greater Shepparton as offering a coordinated, high quality service
- A significant contribution to building Greater Shepparton's capacity as a centre for arts and cultural activities
- Greater visitor awareness of Greater Shepparton's geographical, environmental and heritage assets
- Minimised risk of litigation and insurance claims for Greater Shepparton, and increased protection for the Council's reputation
- Recognition of the cultural value and economic benefits to be derived from the attraction of filming activity.

### APPLICATION TO FILM

#### Film Permits and Local Laws

When filming in streets, parks and gardens and

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other open spaces managed by the Council, a completed "Film Permit Application" form is required. If filming in or around council owned buildings, a "Location Agreement" may be required in addition to the Council's "Film Permit Application" form. Please check with the Economic Development Department when lodging your application. Once the application has been processed by the Council, approval for filming and/or otherwise will then be issued.

Greater Shepparton City Council's local laws incorporate guidelines for the use of roads, footpaths and other public spaces that may impact filming activity. Commencement of this activity is subject to the Council's approval and issuance of a "Film Permit". Decisions will be based on the "Film Permit Application", evidence of adequate public liability insurance and any other documentation required by the Council as outlined in this policy.

The timeframe for the issue of permits correlates to the location and the activity's potential impact on the amenity of residents, business operators and traffic (refer to 'Council Notification and Consultation' and 'Permit Processing' for more information).

Filming is usually not permitted between the hours of midnight and 6.00am. In some instances, permission may be granted for filming during these hours. Express written permission from the Economic Development Department must be obtained. Please refer to the "Guidelines for Filming and Stills Photography in Greater Shepparton" for details on altering curfew hours. The "Guidelines for Filming in Greater Shepparton", "Film Permit Application" form, "Film Permit", "Risk Management Plan" and "Location Agreement" for Greater Shepparton as attached to this policy.

### **Permission to film**

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Permission to film and the charging of fees rests with the Economic Development Department and

the Manager Economic Development. The Economic Development Department is the Council's point of contact for filmmakers and their crew, and liaises with other departments to set up traffic management requirements and ensure public and commercial spaces and council facilities are utilised appropriately. The Economic Development Department is charged with processing applications, issuing permits, coordinating the availability of locations, monitoring filming activity in the region and providing fast and efficient service internally and externally.

In the event of a dispute or difference arising from the interpretation of this policy, any decision made by the Manager Economic Development shall be final and conclusive.

The Manager Economic Development or his/her delegate will exercise discretion within the range of fees approved by the Council. The Manager Economic Development in consultation with the CEO can approve sponsorship in accordance with the Sponsorship Policy, where the 'Criteria for Fee Waivers' are met.

### **Council Notification and Consultation**

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Greater Shepparton understands that a production's schedule may change frequently and at the last minute and, where possible, will endeavour to accommodate flexible timeframes for notification to the Council of proposed filming activity.

Generally, a film permit application that DOES NOT have any impact on the normal flow of traffic must be submitted to council at least three (3) business days prior to the intended commencement date of filming activity.

Applications that DO require traffic and pedestrian management planning must be submitted at least seven (7) business days prior, to allow time for these extra measures to be considered by the Council.

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Major filming activity will require special consultation with representatives of the Council before and during the production process to ensure that any risks which may be associated with the filming activity are minimised, e.g. ongoing disruptions to parking and traffic. (See also 'Risk Management' and 'Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plans').

### Permit Processing

Most film permit applications will be turned over within 48 hours, however, applicants will need to allow for the impact on the location if short notice is given, and will be required to contact relevant stakeholders of their intention to film. (See 'Communication with Stakeholders').

### Fees

Greater Shepparton wishes to ensure greater access to its locations and encourage filming activity by providing a "no fees policy" for film permit processing. Unless existing fees apply to exclusive use of a particular area (e.g. parks, gardens), the "no fees policy" will apply to filming activity that occurs on Council controlled land or property. However, costs to the Council in providing supervisory personnel (if required), event coordination, expenses associated with advertising, traffic control, road closures and any other costs incurred in the facilitation of the application will be borne by the applicant. A bond may be required for filming activity in buildings and on or around property controlled by the Council. A bond is refundable and will act as a security deposit to be paid to the Greater Shepparton City Council subject to the conditions of the "Film Permit". A bond may be applied based on an assessment of risk to, or adverse impact on Council property and to ensure that the production company follows the "Guidelines for Filming and Stills Photography" and the "Location Agreement". The bond (if applicable) will be negotiated before filming begins and will be returned within 14 days

of its conclusion, subject to any claim for damages.

Other fees that may apply include requests for reserved on-street parking. All vehicles must be parked in accordance with a parking plan agreed to by the Council at the time of application (refer to 'Fees to Other Departments' and 'Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plans').

### Sponsorships - Criteria for Fee Waiver

Fees for filming activity may be waived in certain circumstances. Greater Shepparton City Council treats this type of support as a sponsorship. Applicants in receipt of sponsorship are required to acknowledge the Council in the end credits of the project. The acknowledgment will read "Filmed in the City of Greater Shepparton" or "Thanks to Greater Shepparton City Council."

Any applicant seeking to have fees waived must attach a written request to the "Film Permit Application" stating the rationale for sponsorship. All applications for sponsorship will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Sponsorship Policy.

Sponsorship may be available for:

- Projects which demonstrate benefits for the community
- Projects which concern charitable activities
- Documentaries whose subject relates to the cultural heritage of Greater Shepparton
- Emerging producers and/or directors
- Student projects.

Fees will not be waived retrospectively. If fees are waived, charges may still be payable for a bond and/or additional costs such as insurance, security, supervision, the moving or relocation of physical items, and any costs incurred by the Council as a result of the filming activity.

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### Fees to Other Departments

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In the majority of applications the location fee charged (if applicable) covers the full service provided by the Council. Additional fees may be charged when film crews park their vehicles in metered or restricted parking areas. There may be additional permits and/or fees required with certain activities (e.g. erecting a crane on a footpath or removing light posts). Please discuss any additional requirements with the Economic Development Department when lodging your application.

### Damage to Council Property

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Any costs associated with the clearing away of waste generated by the filming activity and for any damage to Council infrastructure including, but not limited to, parks and gardens, irrigation, roads, and other Council property will be borne by the production company/producer.

The production company/producer shall restore the location to its pre-existing condition by the conclusion of filming and to the satisfaction of the Council. If such restoration works are not undertaken to the standard required by Greater Shepparton City Council, it may, at the cost of the production company, in all respects undertake or have undertaken by independent contractors restoration works. The production company/producer will pay the costs of such restoration works to the Council within seven (7) days of a request in writing from the Economic Development Department. The Council may, if it so determines, apply the amount of the bond (if applicable) paid by the production company/producer as payment or part payment as the case may be of such works.

### Equipment

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Greater Shepparton City Council accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of any equipment utilised for film and television production. Reasonable care must be taken at all

times when setting up and dismantling equipment, to minimise impact and to ensure the safety and protection of the community.

### Insurance and Indemnities

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All film permit applications are required to provide evidence of appropriate public liability insurance cover. Applicants must present their Certificate of Currency to the Economic Development Department as part of their film permit application, prior to a permit being issued. The Certificate of Currency must clearly state that:

- (i) The policy covers liability for the death or injury to any person or damage to any property arising out of the activity authorised by the permit.
- (ii) The amount of cover held for filming must not be less than \$10 million (and \$5 million for stills photography).

Information that must be supplied to the Council with a copy of the Certificate of Currency:

- Insurer's name, address, phone, fax and email details
- Policy number
- Policy expiry date
- The names of all the insured parties
- Details of what is covered under the insurance policy
- Details of all the exclusions under the policy (including policy excess)
- Public liability value
- Details of the insurer's local representatives (offshore projects only)
- Claim forms and claims procedure. (offshore projects only).

Applicants employing the services of stunt performers are required to provide evidence of appropriate specialised risk insurance or Workcover, which must accompany a copy of the required safety plans and reports (refer to section on 'Risk Management').

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Applicants are also required to indemnify the Council in relation to any claims or other matters that may arise as a result of any filming activity. All filming activity must comply with common law. For further information on risks, liabilities, indemnity and insurance, contact the Economic Development Department.

### Risk Management

Some aspects of filming activity (e.g. road closures, stunts) may present potential risks that should be identified in advance, with appropriate management measures put in place prior to the commencement of filming. A key component of planning a film shoot involves performing a risk assessment of the proposed filming activity - to identify, analyse and assess foreseeable risks, to establish priorities for risk control and to apply cost effective risk control measures.

The Greater Shepparton City Council may require the applicant to complete a "Risk Assessment Form" in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4360:2004 to demonstrate that a risk assessment has been conducted. Risk Management plans must identify any potential hazards and actions and how the production company intends to mitigate those risks associated with the filming activity. Please check with the Economic Development Department when making your enquiry.

The Greater Shepparton City Council may also require the applicant to submit a safety report in regard to the proposed filming activities, prepared in accordance with the relevant film and television codes and the key Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Acts. If required, a copy of the safety report must accompany the risk management plan and be made available to the Council with the film permit application.

### Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plans

Filming activity can present safety issues for members of the public where the activity interferes with the normal flow of traffic or pedestrian access. Accordingly, the safety of participants and spectators must be taken into consideration when filming takes place.

If the proposed filming activity will impact on any road or footpath, applicants must develop traffic and/or pedestrian management plans outlining the objectives and strategies for managing proposed road closures and/or pedestrian traffic.

Traffic and pedestrian management plans must be accompanied by a risk management plan (in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4360:2004) and must include a detailed diagram of the proposed location that clearly shows:

- Location of any safety lights
- Location of diversion and closure signs
- Location of road closures and barricades
- Location of safety personnel and police (if required)
- Location of Variable Message Signs (VMS).

### Communication with Stakeholders

The Greater Shepparton City Council aims to keep the local community and public authorities informed of events and activities that may have an impact on them, so that they are supportive of production companies and their presence in the City of Greater Shepparton.

Projects that are expected to have an impact on the city's residents, business operators, visitors and infrastructure, require the implementation of appropriate communication and logistics strategies to inform and minimise any inconvenience to the city's stakeholders. For major filming activity, the Greater Shepparton City Council will help facilitate communication and consultation between the production company and local stakeholders. In

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most circumstances, the location managers and/or producers will be required to communicate directly with relevant residents, business operators and public authorities.

In order to maintain a balanced level of community amenity, applicants are required to notify in writing persons and businesses that may be affected by their presence. The timeframe for this notification will be managed in consultation with the Economic Development Department. Notification must include:

- Name of a contact person on site (to handle enquiries and complaints)
- Dates and times for start and finish of set-up and filming
- Details of the use of firearms, stunts or explosives.

Applicants should be advised that other agencies, public authorities and property owners may need to be consulted prior to filming in the City of Greater Shepparton. Filming on land under the control of Parks Victoria, water authorities, VicRoads and the Department of Sustainability and Environment, will necessitate the applicant to contact those agencies and obtain approvals as necessary.

Applicants must notify the Victoria Police Film and Television Office of any filming activity that may be of concern or interest to Victoria Police. This includes but is not limited to all filming planned for public open space, any filming on roads in general and, in particular, filming that requires the use of firearms, imitation firearms and special effects. Consult the Economic Development Department for other instances that may require notifying Victoria Police.

### **Internal Liaison in the Greater Shepparton City Council**

Filming activity can impact on several Council departments and business units. Internal liaison may require communication with Councillors,

Management, Development and Infrastructure, Services, Finance, Corporate and Economic Development, Policy and Governance, Leisure Services, Community Services, Health Department, Organisation Development, Finance, Asset Management, Environmental Services, Major Projects, Economic Development, Tourism, Local Laws, Waste and Open Spaces and Parking.

Effective communication is an essential factor in the provision of these services to the film and television industry. Internal liaison between all departments to support filming activity is essential to provide an efficient service, which develops and maintains positive relationships between the film industry, the Greater Shepparton City Council and its residents, business operators and public authorities.

### **Working with the Greater Shepparton City Council**

The Greater Shepparton City Council fully supports and encourages filming activities in the region.

Understandably, the Council must also protect its interests and assets and promote the reputation and profile of the City of Greater Shepparton including its geographical, environmental and heritage assets.

The Council may choose to have a representative present on location at all times.

The production company/producer is responsible for ensuring all crew, cast and other persons engaged by the production company follow reasonable directions given by Council officers or delegates.

Where possible, Council assistance in the production should be acknowledged in the end credits, or as mutually agreed. The acknowledgment will generally read "Filmed in the City of Greater Shepparton" or "Thanks to Greater Shepparton City Council," with acknowledgement given to the specific location.

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### Content of Film Scripts

Any issue(s) in relation to the content of what is being filmed or how it is going to be used, which could be considered sensitive or offensive to residents of the City of Greater Shepparton is to be detailed in an attachment to the "Film Permit Application" and is to be discussed with the Economic Development Department prior to approval being granted. Sensitive or offensive issues might include nudity, violence, content with political or racial implications etc.

The production company/producer will not portray Greater Shepparton City Council as endorsing or supporting any product, service or any views, opinions, attitudes or ideas suggested, conveyed, advertised, canvassed, depicted or otherwise expressed, without prior written consent from the Council.

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### Promotional Photography

Greater Shepparton City Council may request permission from the production company/producer to photograph the crew during filming. All images will be used solely for promotional purposes to attract filming to the City of Greater Shepparton. Further consultation on this matter will be on a case-by-case basis.

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### External Events

Greater Shepparton City Council will not be held responsible for any interference to the filming activities arising from any external events or third parties not caused or controlled by the Council.

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### Non-Compliance

If the Council finds that the permit holder is in breach of the terms and conditions of the "Film Permit", this will result in immediate cancellation of the permit, removal of the production crew and cessation of their filming activity in Greater Shepparton.

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### Cancellation Costs

Where Greater Shepparton City Council and/or its employees have incurred costs and the production company/producer withdraws an application or incurs cancellation of the film permit due to non-compliance with the terms of the permit, then these costs will be passed on in full to the production company/producer and will be paid within seven (7) days of the receipt of notification of costs.

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### Strategic Alliances

Greater Shepparton City Council has formed a strategic partnership with North East Victoria to establish a provincial film attraction website in collaboration with Film Victoria.

This joint initiative provides the film and television industry with a streamlined tool for accessing information about filming on location in North East Victoria. The website forms part of the broader Film Victoria initiative linking film attraction websites across Victorian local government to its central online locations library.

To view the website, visit [www.filmnortheastvictoria.com.au](http://www.filmnortheastvictoria.com.au) To view Film Victoria's online locations library visit [www.filmvictoria.com.au](http://www.filmvictoria.com.au)

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### Council Film Liaison Services and Contacts

The Economic Development Department is the Council contact for film crews and photographers, and will be responsible for internal liaison to ensure optimum traffic management and use of public and commercial spaces and facilities.

The Economic Development Department provides the film industry with advice on the guidelines and procedures, and evaluates and processes film permit applications. The service encourages location managers and film producers to provide ongoing information about filming activities.

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The Economic Development Department will work in collaboration with Film Victoria and the Victoria Police Film and Television Office and other public authorities when administering these services.

## **Attachments**

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1. Film Permit Application
  2. Risk Management Plan
  3. Location Agreement.
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