



## WHY DALLAS?

### Your Guide To Area Incentives for Film & Video Production

#### **DIVERSE LOCATIONS**

Our area offers two major American cities located close together. Dallas is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest city in the US. A number of small towns that work for either contemporary or period settings are located within approximately 30 to 40 miles from downtown Dallas. Dallas is known for spectacular modern and futuristic office buildings, while Fort Worth offers an older masonry look, sometimes doubling for the northeast or midwest despite some decidedly "western" architecture. Due to the cost benefits of shooting in the Dallas area, we double for other parts of the country or serve as "Anywhere, USA" in at least half of the major projects shot here. An incredible variety of neighborhood looks allowed Oliver Stone to double Washington, D.C., New York, Syracuse, Georgia, and Florida for *Born on the Fourth of July*.

#### **QUALIFIED CREW BASE IN A RIGHT-TO-WORK STATE**

Texas is a right-to-work state, and the Dallas area has the largest crew base in the Southwest. We have highly skilled resident film and video professionals, both union and non-union, ready to work in every area of production. The Texas Association of Film/Tape Professionals production directory lists over 1,200 members (companies and individuals providing film and video-related services and facilities) from around the state, with over 75% of the members in the Dallas Region. It is not unusual for our area to have two to three television series' and three or more films shooting simultaneously using a majority local crew. **The film commission can provide you with Crew and Vendor lists from recent projects in our area, and the most recent TAF/TP directory.**

#### **DEEP TALENT POOL – UNION AND NON-UNION**

We have over 800 SAG actors in Dallas, and several thousand more who are non-union. We also have about 10 SAG-franchised talent agencies and about two dozen experienced casting directors, including ten who are CSA members. Film and television producers cast many of their speaking roles - both large and small - locally, saving thousands of dollars in travel related fees without sacrificing quality. Commercials and corporate videos especially make use of the local talent for the same reasons.

#### **ABUNDANCE OF AVAILABLE FILM AND VIDEO EQUIPMENT**

The Dallas area also boasts the best availability of film and video equipment in the Southwest. Leading the way is Panavision/Dallas (formerly Victor Duncan), the only such franchise in Texas. Complete camera, grip and electric equipment is available through more than ten companies located here. Though most will ship equipment to other parts of Texas and the Southwest, shooting here allows immediate service or replacement in emergencies. In addition to the usual, these companies offer a wide range of production vans, generators, cranes, camera cars, and video assist systems. Since Dallas is the Southwest Distribution Center for Kodak Film stock, you don't have to ship it from L.A., and you can use this center for emergency orders if needed. The extensive inventory of available equipment also makes our area a competitive rental market for commercial and corporate bids.

#### **THE ONLY TWO 35MM FILM PROCESSING LABS IN TEXAS**

"The Lab" at Video Post and Transfer, and the Dallas branch of "The Filmworkers Club" offer 35mm film processing. Both also have transfer capabilities. Projects shooting in any other part of Texas have to fly film either to Dallas or out of state for processing.

### **SOUND STAGES**

The Studios at Las Colinas, formerly home to *Walker*, *Texas Ranger*, *Barney* and the NBC-TV sitcom *13 East*, houses three state-of-the-art soundstages and boasts the largest stage in the area at 15,000 square feet. MPS Studios also offers three stages, the largest measuring 8,000 square feet. There are additional stage facilities in the area measuring from 2,500 to 5,000 square feet. Many television movies also opt to shoot in warehouse space, abundant in the Dallas area. *Universal Soldier*, *The Return* made extensive use of the 100,000+ square feet of raw space at the former Superconducting Supercollider in Waxahachie for their stage work.

### **PERMITS – WHEN NEEDED – ARE EASILY OBTAINED**

Permits are generally easy to obtain and relatively inexpensive. In some cases, simple notification is all that is required. However, because the Dallas area includes so many different municipalities, it is best to contact the film commission for specific permitting information.

### **SALES TAX EXEMPTION**

Texas' best-known financial incentive is our 100% sales tax exemptions for filmmakers. Unlike other states and provinces which offer sales tax refunds months after production, **Texas gives up-front, hassle-free exemptions** on much of what you buy or rent for your production with a one page standard form. No cumbersome forms to fill out detailing expenditures for "rebates." You simply show your exemption form to the vendor. **Check with the film commission for a list of qualifying items and services and to receive an exemption certificate.**

### **HOTEL TAX EXEMPTION**

If you stay in a Texas hotel or motel for 30 or more consecutive days, you are exempt from the 6% state occupancy tax. You must claim the exemption upon check-in. You may also claim a sales tax rebate for fuel used off-road (in generators, boats or tractors).

### **FILM FRIENDLY HOTELS**

Numerous film-friendly hotels and corporate housing companies actively solicit film and television business. **The film commission can provide you with a list of such hotels and companies** in all price ranges and all areas of the Metroplex to help narrow and simplify your search for housing.

### **FILM FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES**

In addition to being the designated film liaison for both Dallas and Fort Worth, ours is the only film commission operating as a consortium of over 24 area cities. Rather than the grudging cooperation you sometimes find in other suburbs, ours actually pay us to get you to shoot there, and provide on-site liaisons to assist our film commission staff wherever you shoot. We're happy to act as your liaison with other county agencies, local law enforcement, or city and county governments.

### **CENTRALLY LOCATED TO BOTH COASTS AND ALL POINTS IN BETWEEN**

DFW Airport is the second busiest hub in the country and offers a larger choice of direct flights from Los Angeles and New York than any other airport in Texas. Films shooting in other areas sometimes involve transfers through DFW. American Airlines provides corporate support for the DFW Regional Film Commission, and has been extremely responsive to production companies. Also, because we're in the middle of the country, we have a 9:30 p.m. FEDEX deadline, which means you can ship to the West Coast later than from most other parts of the country.

### **GOOD WEATHER VIRTUALLY YEAR-ROUND**

It is highly unusual to lose any production time due to weather. During the winter the days tend to be pretty mild, though it does freeze at night and the foliage takes on a winter "look". Summer can be pretty hot, but the local crews are used to working through the heat. Films have sometimes doubled several seasons shooting in a single month.

### **EXCELLENT PRE-PRODUCTION AND LOCATION RESOURCES**

We will analyze your script, outline or storyboard and review the area for locations that fit your project. In most cases, we can provide you with an overnight package of specific location photos, a regional information package and guidance on what locations, facilities and resources best suit your project (occasionally we need a day or two to put together photos of more specific locations). We have information on weather; housing; crews; equipment; talent; and office, warehouse and stage space. We will also research and provide you with any other information necessary to make location and other pre-production decisions.

### **SCOUTING ASSISTANCE FROM WELL-QUALIFIED FILM COMMISSION STAFF**

When you're ready for in-person location scouting, we're ready too. Our project manager was a freelance location manager for ten years prior to joining the film commission, and our other staff members have over 30 years of combined film commission and production experience. We will help with itineraries, transportation, housing, meetings or anything else you might need to make your trip a success.

**THE DALLAS AREA OFFERS A COST-EFFECTIVE, CONVENIENT CHOICE FOR PRODUCTIONS FILMING OUTSIDE OF THEIR HOME BASE. PLEASE CONTACT THE DALLAS FILM COMMISSION FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW WE CAN HELP YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE BENEFITS.**