

**CITY OF MONROVIA  
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER**

**DATE:** January 12, 2010  
**TO:** MOTAB  
**FROM:** Diane Delmatoff, Administrative Assistant

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**TITLE: Old Town Filming Recommendations**

**OBJECTIVE:** This report will provide MOTAB with an update on the 2009 Filming Survey and Committee recommendations.

**BACKGROUND:** The last time the Monrovia Old Town Advisory Board sent out a survey to obtain feedback from merchants concerning filming in Old Town was in 2002. The results from that survey indicated that filming was broadly accepted by the merchants. The problems that were noted were the impact on parking and that filming inhibited traffic.

With the issue of filming being brought up at numerous MOTAB meetings, the Board decided it was time to do another survey. Boardmember Sandford offered to head a committee to address filming in Old Town.

**ANALYSIS:** Approximately 240 surveys were mailed out to businesses in the Old Town area. 64 surveys were returned, representing a 27% response rate. Overall, the survey indicated that the merchants are in favor of filming (68%). The top two benefits from filming that the respondents listed are the revenue the activity brings in and the exposure of the Old Town area.

Filming revenue can be quite substantial beyond what is paid to the City. For example the most recent filming of an episode of "Mad Men" paid \$14,900 to the merchants whose store fronts they used and an additional \$11,500 to surrounding businesses. That is \$26,400 paid directly to Old Town merchants for one day of filming. Also, in the days leading up to the event the crew ate and shopped in town spending up to \$1,000. A \$1,750 impact fee was paid directly to MOTAB and \$3,029 went to the City. Two on-site film liaisons were employed, each earning approximately \$400, which was paid for by the production company.

More than half of the surveys listed the promotion of Old Town as a benefit of filming. This includes the recognition of the area when watching a movie or TV show, increased traffic to town and having your business name listed in the credits.

17% of the surveys were neutral about filming, and 15% were against it. The main reasons listed for being against filming are that it takes away valuable parking spaces, traffic and congestion and businesses are impacted without being fairly compensated.

Based on the recommendations from The Filming Committee Staff will implement the following changes.

1. Film Crew Parking – Film crews are never allowed to park in Old Town and the company is required to rent a lot to accommodate their crews. Filming will almost always take up some parking for their equipment trucks, continuity of shots or vehicles actually being part of the film. The Film Liaisons will ensure that only parking spaces that have been approved in the film permit are being used. The fact that two liaisons are now required make this task much more feasible.

Also, the upper deck of the Colorado Commons parking structure is offered to filming companies for crew parking.

2. Signage – Staff will create signage that explains what is being filmed and directs people to available parking.

3. Merchant & Customer Parking – Staff will continue to encourage merchants and their employees to park in the Colorado Commons parking structure. It has been challenging to get the local merchants to use this structure, they prefer to park directly in front of their businesses. Most days the top 2 levels are nearly empty. About five years ago valet parking was tried out in Old Town and it was a total failure on top of being very expensive and is not feasible at this time.

4. Business Disruption and Merchant Communication – Staff will work on a flyer with suggestions to merchants on how to better benefit from filming. Also, a letter will be sent requesting email addresses so that they can be informed of filming activities.

The conclusion of the survey and Committee Report is that the majority of merchants are in favor of filming and that the benefits outweigh the negatives. Most problems arise with production companies that have lower budgets and a less professional crew. The recent changes to the guidelines should address most of the issues and should eliminate many problems.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Board receive and file this report.

Respectfully,  
Diane Delmatoff