

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



**VANCOUVER
ISLAND SOUTH
FILM & MEDIA
COMMISSION**

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COMMISSIONER'S REPORT



TARA-LEE NOVAK

Film Commissioner

The Vancouver Island South Film and Media Commission is situated on the traditional and unceded territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking peoples which includes the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ communities. We acknowledge that their historical relationship with the land continues today and we're deeply grateful for the opportunity to live, work and play on this beautiful land.

Please allow me to introduce myself: In the Fall of 2024, I took on the role of film commissioner for the Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission. After 14 years of service to the region, Kathleen Gilbert officially retired, leaving behind some sizeable shoes to fill. During her tenure, Kathleen helped grow the South Island film sector from a \$6-million industry to a \$60-million industry. My intention is to help our organization meet this moment of transition and seek new opportunities to support regional prosperity.

I acknowledge that this will be challenging as we are in unprecedented times. In 2024, production throughout the province slowed down and the South Island was not immune. Our local film sector felt the dampening effects of the 2023 Writers Guild of America and SAG-AFTRA strikes. Some of our local crew continued to work throughout the year but overall our region noticed the decline in film.

Despite this, I remain cautiously optimistic about the future. That's because in December 2024, the Province announced a proposed increase to film tax incentives and at the time of writing this, the Film Incentive BC tax credits for Canadian content productions increased from 35% to 40%; while the Production Services Tax Credit for international productions increased from 28% to 36%. This policy was designed to help keep film & TV jobs in BC and has generated new and high-quality project leads in the South Island.

My hope is that the projects slated for our region in the spring will not only offer a boost to the local economy but also a boost to community morale! Vancouver Island South is one of the best places in the world to work and live and it's now my great honour to promote it to the world.

With gratitude,

Tara-Lee Novak



Photo courtesy of Destination Greater Victoria

The Vancouver Island South Film Commission is a non-profit organization that drives economic development in the South Island's creative sector.

Our Mandate:



Drive regional prosperity through economic development.



Engage and empower the community.



Connect British Columbians with career-building opportunities in the creative sector.



Support the growth of infrastructure.

South Island Stats 2019-2023

\$60 Million

Average annual direct spend in the region from the film industry.

4300
Jobs Created

167
Productions

Provincial & National Stats

\$2.3 Billion

BC GDP*

\$12.9 Billion

Canada's total film & TV production volume

SUCCESS STORIES

VISFMC IN THE NEWS

"Scary Side of Vancouver Island featured in Scary Movies", CHEK News

"Pretty rad: Island-filmed TV series", Ethan Morneau, CHEK News.

"Ladysmith is thriving by taking a slice out of Hollywood North", Tchadas Leos, CHEK News



Photo courtesy of Destination Greater Victoria

TESTIMONIALS

"Film is an important economic and community driver. In my time as Mayor of Ladysmith and Chairperson of Cowichan Valley Regional District, I witnessed firsthand the value of strong Arts and Film sectors in community building. In just 53 days of filming, SONIC THE HEDGEHOG created over 1,450 local jobs and spent more than \$22 million supporting local labour as well as spent \$15.5 million on production-related goods and services. The potential of film on the South Island has yet to be fully realized and I'm optimistic for its future."

~Aaron Stone, CEO of South Island Prosperity Partnership

"Thank you so very much Maureen for speaking to our students at the Success in Humanities and Fine Arts event. Your knowledge and experience is inspiring, and our students gained invaluable practice networking with you. We are so grateful for your time and look forward to working with you in the future."

~Camosun College, Co-op & Career Services Team

2024 STATS

Projects Serviced
38

Package Request
127

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**MAUREEN
LANDA- MCGAVIN**

Production Services Specialist

As Production Services Specialist, Maureen assists prospective film and television productions with locations, crew, and local services to promote our region for filming. She can also be found supporting local productions; writing grant applications; editing our 'Spotlight' members' newsletter; speaking to students about careers in film, and can even be occasionally found on set, doing hair & makeup.

Maureen began her career in Winnipeg, where she regularly worked for acclaimed filmmaker Guy Maddin. After moving to Minneapolis, her film work led to the co-creation 'Saving Face Continuity Software for Makeup & Hair', which has taken her to IMATS LA and to the Television Academy in Hollywood where she spoke to IATSE Local 706 makeup artists. A true lover of independent film, Maureen landed her dream job working on the Coen Brothers' "A Serious Man", while also managing to maintain a presence as a freelance artist, at ShopNBC, a home shopping channel in the United States, and as an educator, teaching hair and makeup artistry. Maureen returned to Canada, in 2017, moving to Victoria, to be closer to her family, to return to the film industry and to have a west-coast presence with SavingFace. In late 2021, she joined the staff at the Vancouver Island South Film Commission.

Garnett is a an experienced Chair & Department Supervisor for First Aid & Craft Services with nearly two decades in the film industry. With certifications in OFA3, Mental Health First Aid, Motion Picture Industry Orientation (MPIO), and experience working with WorkSafeBC, she brings both knowledge and heart to every crew she works with. Her strong reputation among industry professionals uniquely positions her to help the Vancouver Island South Film Commission coordinate its crew database and initiatives.

In addition to supporting crew profiles and listings as well as communications, Garnett also employs her infectious go-getter attitude to ensure the film commission office runs smoothly, including administrative duties and office management. Her traditional teachings rooted in community drives Garnett every day, ensuring everyone feels valued and ready to tackle whatever obstacles present themselves.



**GARNETT
HUMENICK**

Administrative Assistant

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**MARESA
COUSINEAU**

Digital Marketer

Maresa's industry experience across the entertainment industry, with specialty in business and legal affairs, project management, and production prep for unscripted television, documentary, animation, and digital media projects.

Thriving in new challenges, Maresa's ability to adapt and remain flexible have bolstered her growth across the media industry. In 2023, leveraging her experience in storytelling, she began working with brands directly to market compelling narratives that resonate with audiences. Her work is designed to capture attention, foster connection, and elevate visual impact.

Maresa is a relationship-builder and empathetic leader. She has consistently earned praise for keeping a positive attitude and level head no matter the circumstances.

2024 EVENTS

Tax Credit Webinar with Creative BC

Camosun Career Fair

Municipal council meetings

Winter and Fall Mixers

Municipal Film Liaisons Meeting

Creative Industries Week

Municipal Job Fairs

MEMBERSHIPS

Creative BC Regional Film Commissions

Canadian Film Television Committee

Screen BC

Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI)

MPPIA

Victoria Chamber of Commerce

"Film is an important part of the castle's strategy as it helps us generate some of the revenue required to maintain this National Historical Site. Tara-Lee and the team at the Vancouver Island South Film Commission do great work helping our organization liaise with film projects and facilitate arrangements that are mutually beneficial to production and our museum."

John Hughes, Executive Director at Craigdarroch Castle



Regional Needs

- Diversify local economy.
- Leverage existing skills and assets.
- Support small businesses.
- Support youth in the economy and prepare the workforce for the future.
- Promote the region as a great destination for tourists and a viable place to work and live.
- Support green job creation.

South Island Film Commission Offerings:

Production work can lead to high-paying jobs without requiring high levels of post-secondary education.

2500 registered South Island film locations and 300 local crew members.

Productions filmed in the South Island may qualify for labour-based Provincial and Federal tax incentives.

The film commission connects people to upskilling and training opportunities.

Film tourism has increased in popularity over the years. For example, Netflix in your Neighbourhood catalogues where screen projects are filmed with links to municipal websites.

ReelGreen is a national initiative within the provincial film commission at Creative BC that helps Canada's film industry reduce its environmental footprint.

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Freedom Rent to Own

CONTACT US

Want to help us grow the film sector in the South Island? Please get in touch to learn how to become a member, vendor and/or sponsor. Our ambitious goal of attracting more projects and driving the local economy is possible with your support.



Photo courtesy of Destination Greater Victoria



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