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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

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From: Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development  
Report: #2025-INFO-76  
Date: October 17, 2025

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**Subject:**

2023-2024 Durham Region Film and Television Industry Overview

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**Recommendation:**

Receive for information

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of film and television production activity in Durham Region for the 2023 and 2024 calendar years.
- 1.2 The report also offers an overview of this industry which includes key activities supporting the sector and factors impacting it in the region.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Ontario, and specifically the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) is one of the leading jurisdictions for film and television production around the globe, consistently hosting over 400 productions annually. Many productions are filmed in more than 80 municipalities in Ontario, creating jobs and economic impact for local suppliers, vendors, and residents.
- 2.2 Most of Ontario's film production studios and production companies are located in the City of Toronto, and most production companies active in Durham Region have established offices in Toronto.

- 2.3 Due to its proximity to Toronto, Durham Region plays a key role in all aspects of Ontario's film, television, and digital media industry. Durham's soundstages, studios and backlot, film industry workforce, supporting service providers, and availability of filming location sites make Durham a welcome host for film and television production, as well as pre- and post-production activities.
- 2.4 Over the past 10 years, annual production values in the film and television industry in Durham Region experienced an average annual growth rate of 15 per cent, and the number of annual production days experienced an average annual growth rate of 13 per cent. Please see Appendix 1 for a yearly breakdown by value, prep/shoot/wrap days, and projects.

### **3. Previous Reports and Decisions**

- 3.1 [2023-INFO-78](#) 2021 and 2022 Durham Region Film and Television Production Activity.
- 3.2 [Report 2024-EDT-8](#) Film and Television Sector Development, 2012 to 22, and Future Plans.
- 3.3 [2024-INFO-10-2023](#) Durham Region International Film Festival.

### **4. About Ontario's Film and Television Industry and 2023 and 2024 Statistics**

- 4.1 In 2023, Ontario's film and television industry contributed \$1.8 billion to Ontario's economy, creating 25,862 high-value full-time equivalent direct and spin-off jobs for Ontarians.
- 4.2 In 2024, Ontario's film and television industry rebounded from the downturn in 2023 (due to foreign labour disruptions) by almost 40%, contributing \$2.6 billion to Ontario's economy in 2024 and creating 34,836 high-value full-time equivalent direct and spin-off jobs for Ontarians.
- 4.3 In Ontario, there is currently 3.65 million square feet of stage space with an additional 1.6 million square feet scheduled to be completed over the next few years in Central and Northern Ontario. This increase of stage space will facilitate further growth of this industry.
- 4.4 Jobs created by film and television production in the province include technicians (such as gaffers, grips, camera crew, carpenters, set designers, hair and makeup crew), production managers and coordinators, location managers, post-production

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managers, accountants, performers, and drivers. The average fulltime salary for a job within the industry in Canada is \$82,425.

- 4.5 Ontario's film industry is committed to environmental sustainability through the Ontario Green Screen (OGS) Initiative, a public/private partnership of 25 industry and government partners. OGS provides the tools, education, and community necessary to make real sustainable change. Durham Region, through the Economic Development and Tourism Division, is an active member of the Advisory Committee supporting the OGS activities.

## **5. Durham Region Production Activity 2023**

- 5.1 In 2023, the estimated value of film production activity in Durham Region was \$46 million generated from 32 projects and 311 days of shooting on location.
- 5.2 The year-over-year decrease in 2023 can be attributed to strike action by both the Writers Guild of America (WGA) the Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) which had a negative impact on production levels across Canada with 60-70% of production coming to a halt.
- 5.3 The strike resulted in a total of 186 days of labour disruption, which presented challenges for the Ontario Film and Television industry, leading to production delays, disruptions and a reduction in foreign production by approximately 55%.
- 5.4 Durham Region remained committed to providing permitting and operational support to film productions that continued their work throughout the disruption.
- 5.5 In 2023, television series, feature films, TV movies, and commercials accounted for 88.3 per cent of the total number of productions in Durham Region. Additional types of production included documentaries, web video and real estate shows.
- 5.6 Notable productions that were filmed in Durham in 2023 included:
- a. Feature films/Television Movies: *Grayson's Encounter*, *Thanksgiving*, *My Boss' Wedding 2*, and *Super Icyclone*.
  - b. Television series: *Botanical Jungle*, *Cross*, *IT: Welcome to Derry*, *Old Enough*, *Reacher*, *The Madness*, *The Umbrella Academy*, and *The Way Home*.
  - c. Commercials: *AcuVue*, *Belair Direct*, *Canada Goose*, *Desjardins*, *Lipton*, *Planet Fitness*, *Reliance Home Comfort* and *Volkswagen*.

5.7 Major domestic and foreign production studios and distribution companies that brought these projects to Durham included Amazon Prime, Bell Fibe TV, Blue Ant Media, CBS Studios, Hallmark, Netflix, and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

## **6. Durham Region Production Activity 2024**

6.1 In 2024, the estimated value of film production activity in Durham Region was \$91.6 million generated from 71 projects and 703 days of shooting on location. Please see Attachment 2 for a breakdown by municipality, production value, days, projects, and type.

6.2 In 2024, television series, commercials, feature films and TV movies accounted for 78.9 per cent of the total number of productions (projects) in Durham Region. Additional types of productions included are documentaries, TV specials, short films, and a music video.

6.3 Notable productions that were filmed in Durham in 2024 include

- a. Feature films/Television Movies: *A Novel Christmas, Northbound Purgatory, The 911 Killer and the Foods That Built America.*
- b. Television series: *Accused, BET, Cross, IT: Welcome to Derry, Fubar, Gen V, Ginny & Georgia, Level 2, Love It Or List It, Marathon 5959, Mistletoe Murders, Motorheads, Murdoch Mysteries, Old Enough, Overcompensating, Reacher, Tall Pines, The Handmaids Tale, The Way Home and Twisted Metal.*
- c. Commercials: *Cascade, Edward Jones, Fidelity, Greenshield, Hyundai, Maple Leaf Foods, Microsoft, Reliance Start Up, Silverado and Tim Hortons.*

6.4 Major domestic and foreign production studios and distribution companies that brought these projects to Durham included APTN, Amazon MGM Studios/Amazon Prime, CBC, CBS Studios, CityTV, Fox Network, Hallmark, HGTV Canada, Lionsgate Canada, Netflix, Peacock TV, Shaftesbury, Sony Pictures Entertainment and Warner Bros.

## **7. Factors Impacting Continued Film and Television Industry Growth in Durham**

7.1 Recently, a notable change was made to the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit (OPSTC) where location expenditures are now eligible for OPSTC, up to 5% of the production's qualifying expenditures. Since most of the production activity in Durham is on location filming, this is a further incentive for producers to film in the region.

- 7.2 Demand for studio space is high in the GTHA. Recent industry investments in Durham Region, such as the Sunbelt Rentals Film and TV Backlot and TriBro Toronto East Studios will enhance the attractiveness of Durham Region as a desired filming location, furthering the growth and prosperity of the industry and increasing the overall economic contribution of the industry to the region.
- 7.3 The use of Generative A.I. in creative projects is creating some risk with ownership, authorship, or artistic voice and the film industry is learning how to protect their rights and creative vision when writing scripts, creating visuals, or developing original content.

## **8. 2024 Film Durham Key Sector Development Activities**

- 8.1 Film Durham, in collaboration with municipal film liaisons, hosted a Locations Seminar on Feb 29, at the Parkwood National Heritage Site. The 72 Durham homeowners and businesses who attended the seminar learned from industry professionals about hosting a film or television production and how to market their unique locations. Staff engages with residents, businesses and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation to identify locations that could potentially be used for filming and promote them to the film and television industry.
- 8.2 Film Durham's annual Film and Television Industry Career Fair was held on March 17, at Durham College/Ontario Tech University's Campus Recreation and Wellness Centre. Approximately 1,100 attendees met with industry insiders and made valuable connections while learning about the over 150 career opportunities in this exciting industry. This free event was open to high school and post-secondary students and adults in search of a new career.
- 8.3 Ontario Creates hosted a familiarization tour for foreign studios on June 3-7, where staff presented Durham Region's Film and Television Value Proposition to eight US & UK based production executives at Studio City, Toronto, and during a tour of the Sunbelt Rentals Film & TV Backlot in Pickering.

## **9. 2024 Durham Region International Film Festival (DRIFF)**

- 9.1 Film Durham supports DRIFF, an annual film festival that brings unique, independent film experiences to diverse audiences in Durham Region, nurturing cultural connections, learning, and the development of local talent through a shared love of film. Through carefully curated films that celebrate diverse stories and voices, DRIFF enriches the cultural fabric of the Durham Region, making it a vital piece of Ontario's film ecosystem.

- 9.2 Special events like the Local Culinary Showcase promote inclusivity by inviting 2025 participants like The Refuge and their youth as well as Gomoku/Nathan's Jerk and One More Cocoa with Caribbean-Mexican and Canadian Asian flavours.
- 9.3 DRIFF 2024 was held October 24-26 and included a gala event, film screenings, award ceremonies, industry workshops, panels and experiential activities. DRIFF hosted many local and international filmmakers including the Emerging Filmmaker Incubator winners Mitchell Jaramillo and Siddharth Sharma of Hold the Sauce Films, connecting them with audiences through post-screening question and answer periods, workshops, and networking events. The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation are proud supporters of DRIFF each year.
- 9.4 The atmosphere every day at each venue was warm and celebratory-the film festival's community spirit was palpable. The 2024 program featured documentaries, animation, shorts, and feature films, representing a variety of styles and genres.
- 9.5 DRIFF 2024 had a dramatic increase of 46 per cent more visitors over the previous year with an overall attendance of 751 people while fostering community pride, providing positive economic benefits, and showcasing Durham Region as a welcoming and inclusive community.
- 9.6 DRIFF 2025 will take place October 23-25, 2025.

## **10. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 10.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:
- a. Connected and Vibrant Communities
    - C6. Continue to revitalize and transform downtowns into hubs of economic, social, and cultural connection.
    - C7. Create accessible, lively, and culturally welcoming public spaces, including opportunities to access nature.
  - b. Resilient Local Economies
    - R2. Support the growth of new business startups and small to medium local businesses.
    - R3. Develop, attract, and support a skilled and qualified workforce, including youth and newcomers.

- R5. Cultivate and promote local arts, culture, quality of place, and tourism that embrace urban excitement and country charm.

c. Strong Relationships

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities.
- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.

10.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.

## 11. Conclusion

11.1 Durham's filming locations, talented workforce, and industry support services continues to create strong demand from the film and television industry. As a result, it is expected that Durham's film and television industry will continue to grow significantly alongside overall growth in the Province of Ontario.

11.2 Economic Development and Tourism Division staff will continue to undertake various initiatives to support the growth of the film and television industry in Durham Region and will continue to play a supporting role in DRIFF to highlight our film sector internationally and grow and strengthen our creative industries.

## 12. Attachments

Attachment #1: 2014-2024 Durham Region Film and Television Sector Growth

Attachment #2: 2024 Durham Region Film and Television Production Activity

Respectfully submitted,

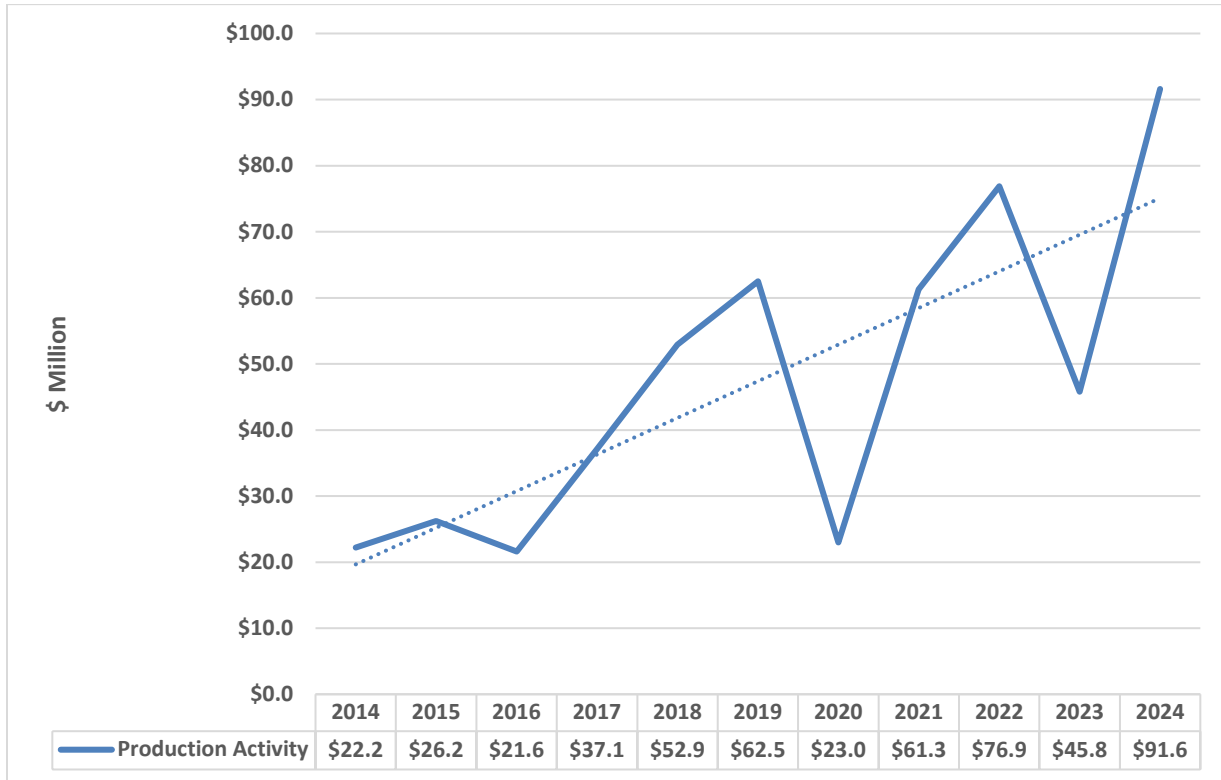
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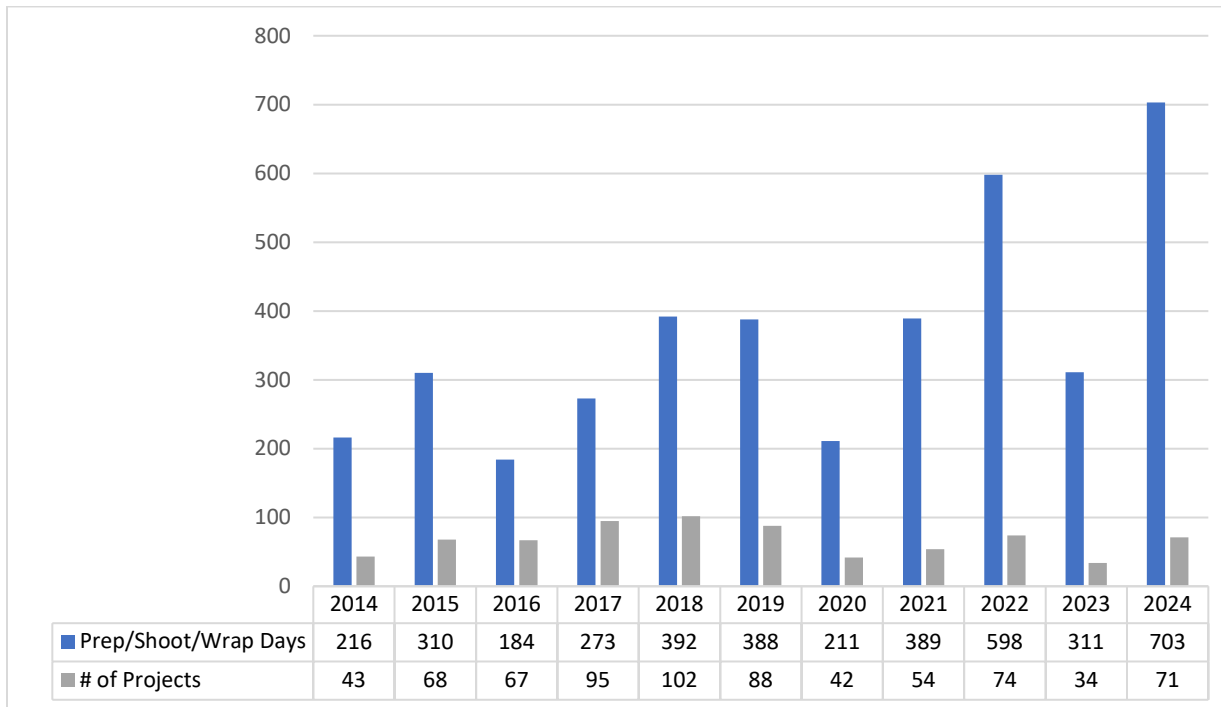
Sandra Austin  
Commissioner of Community Growth and  
Economic Development

## Appendix 1: 2014 – 2024 Durham Region Film and Television Sector Growth

### Film and Television Production Activity Value by Year 2014 to 2024



### Film and Television Production Days and Projects by Year 2014 to 2024



**Appendix 2: 2024 Durham Region Film and Television Production Activity**  
**Production Activity by Municipality**

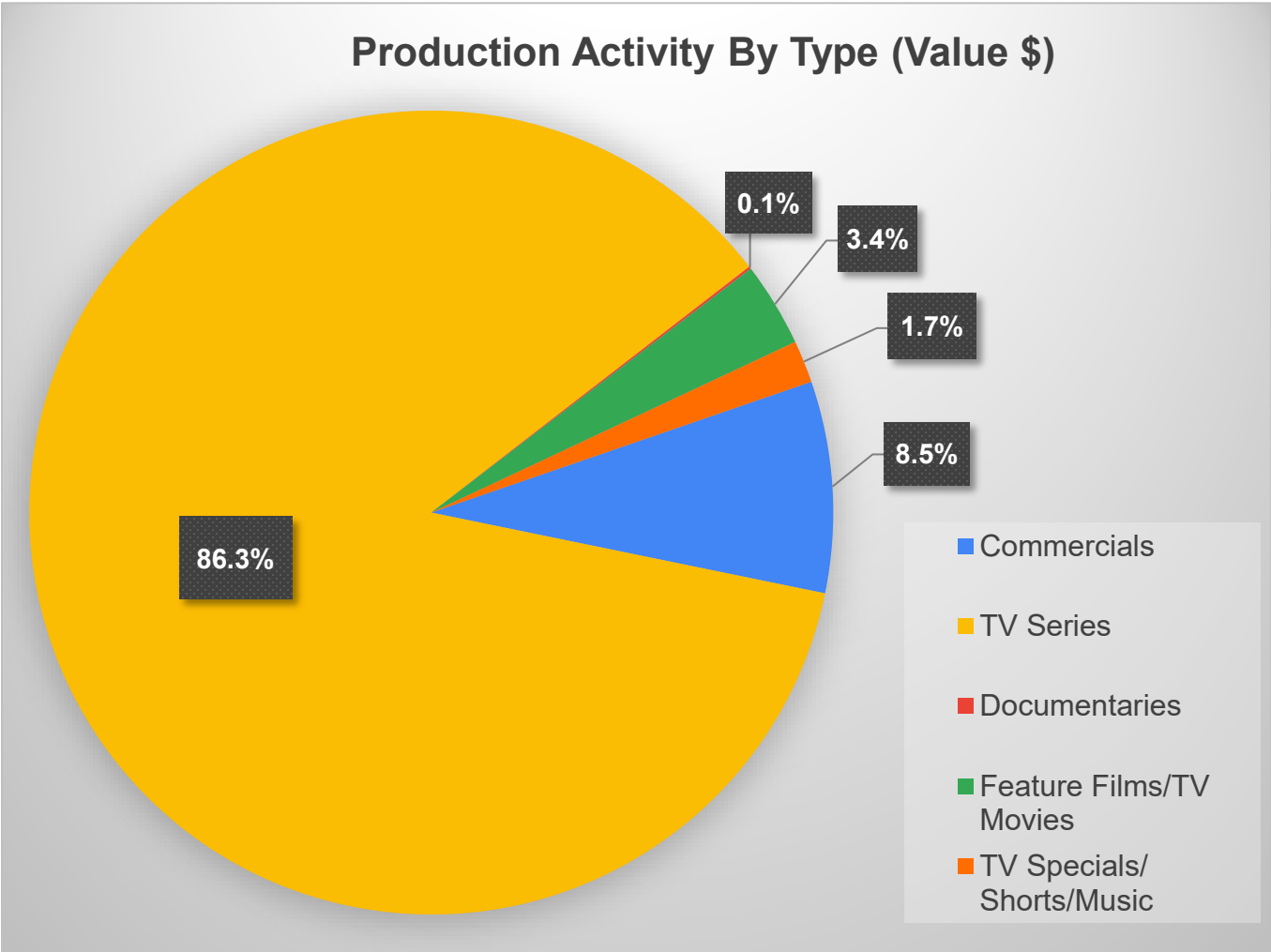
| <b>By Permit</b> | <b>Production Value \$</b> | <b>Prep/Shoot/<br/>Wrap Days</b> | <b># Of Projects</b> |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ajax             | 1,859,842                  | 12                               | 8                    |
| Brock            | -                          | 0                                | 0                    |
| Clarington       | 1,020,000                  | 11                               | 5                    |
| Oshawa           | 11,822,833                 | 79                               | 11                   |
| Pickering        | 49,366,625                 | 423                              | 43                   |
| Scugog           | 8,742,664                  | 55                               | 4                    |
| Uxbridge         | 11,769,900                 | 75                               | 8                    |
| Whitby           | 3,055,200                  | 22                               | 5                    |
| Durham Region    | 3,960,000                  | 26                               | 9*                   |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>91,597,063</b>          | <b>703</b>                       | <b>71**</b>          |

Source: Association of Film Commissions International (AFCI) Tracking Production Revenue: Direct Spending for On-location Production chart.

\* Film permits for regional roads only – no film permits issued by a municipality

\*\* Total is not sum of above as projects sometimes are shot in several municipalities and regional roads

2024 Production Activity by Type (Value \$)



**2024 Production Activity by Type (Number of Projects)**

