



Scene in San Francisco

Incentive Program

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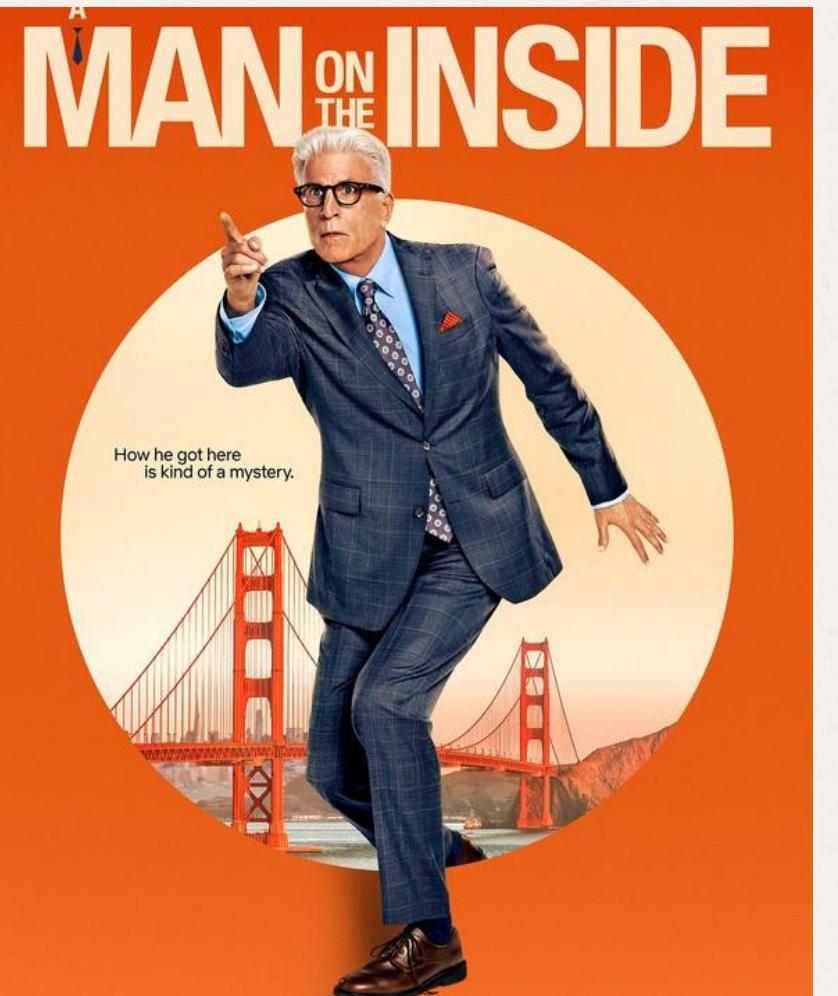
Film SF | Budget & Finance Committee
January 14, 2026

Film SF

Film SF | San Francisco Film Commission champion filming in San Francisco to support a diversity of storytellers and our thriving production community.

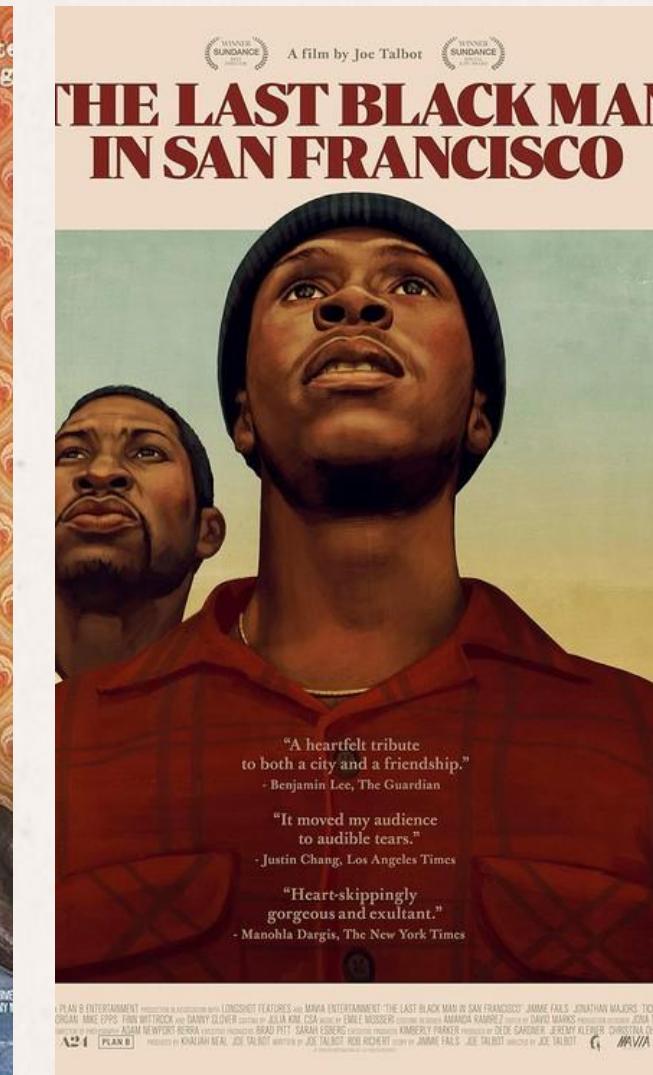
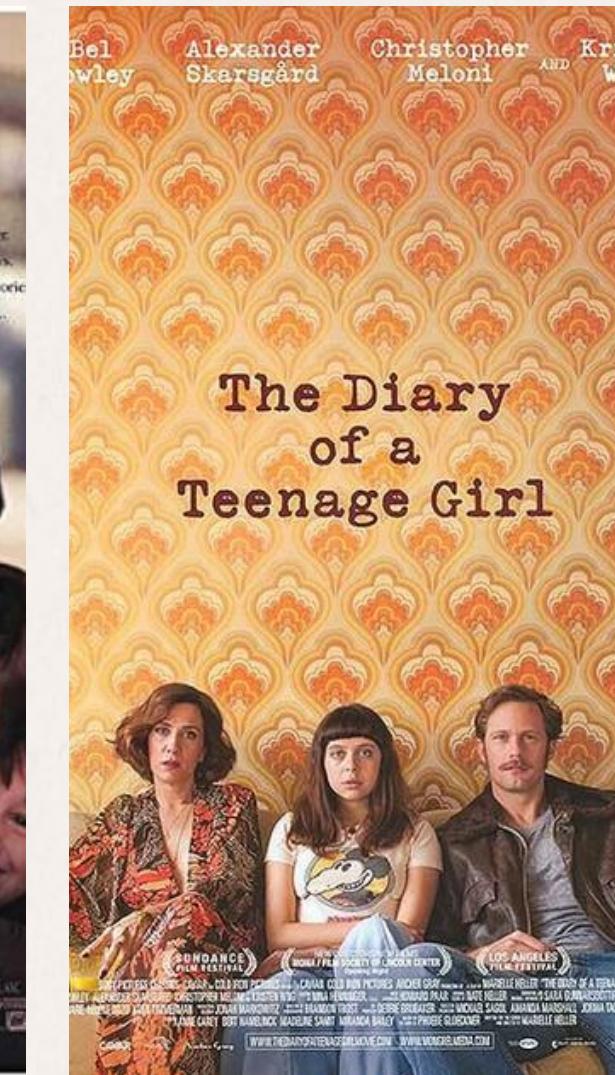
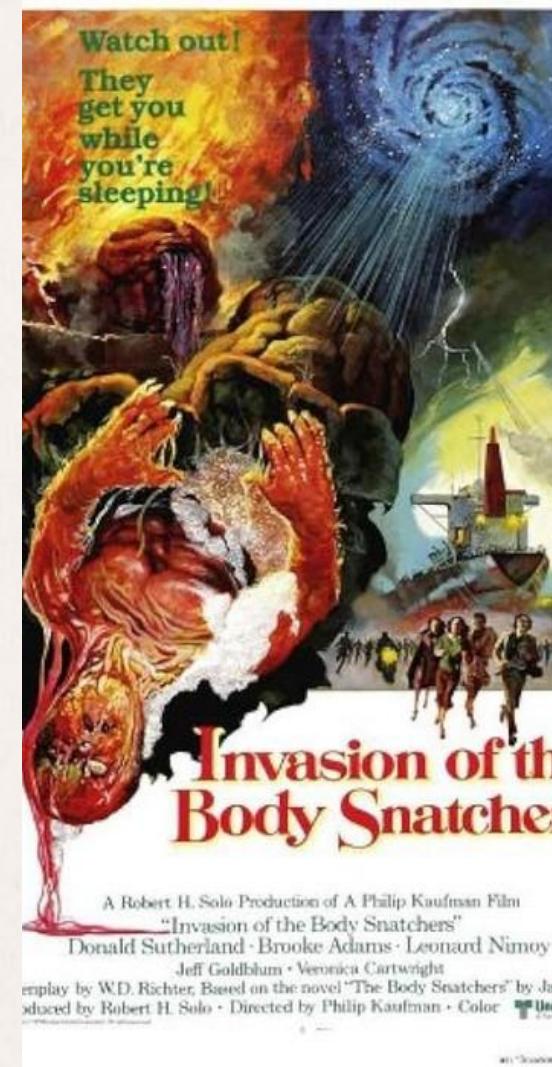
We attract productions to our cinematic city to stimulate economic development, create jobs, and market San Francisco on the global stage.

Our vision is a city that embraces and invests in storytellers and entices productions to call San Francisco their home.



History

San Francisco is one of the most cinematic cities in the world, known for its iconic landmarks, vibrant film industry, classics like *Vertigo*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and *Mrs. Doubtfire*, and moving independent stories such as *The Last Black Man in San Francisco* and *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*.



Industry Data

- A single production can inject millions of dollars into the local economy through direct spending on wages, services, rentals, location fees, catering, transportation, lodging, and more.¹
- The average location shoot adds \$670,000 & 1,500 jobs a day into the local economy.²



Industry Data

In California, the motion picture and television industry is directly responsible for more than **258,860+ jobs**, including **\$42.6+ billion in wages**, **165,570+ jobs** related to production, **93,290+ jobs** related to distributing movies, television and other video content to consumers, and **816,580+ jobs** including indirect and induced impact on local vendors and other businesses.³



Current Incentive Program

History

Since 2006, we've rebated over **\$7.6 million** to **48** productions, generating **\$95.5 million** in local spending.

ROI

For every dollar rebated, productions have spent **\$12.50** locally.

Hires

16,062 local crew + actors employed (IATSE Local 16, Teamsters 2785, and SAG-AFTRA).

Workforce Development

219 First Source hires.

Wages

\$26.3 million in wages paid to local SF crew and talent.

Spend

\$69.1 million on goods and services including gas, hotels, car rentals, location fees, office supplies, equipment, catering, and more.

Challenge



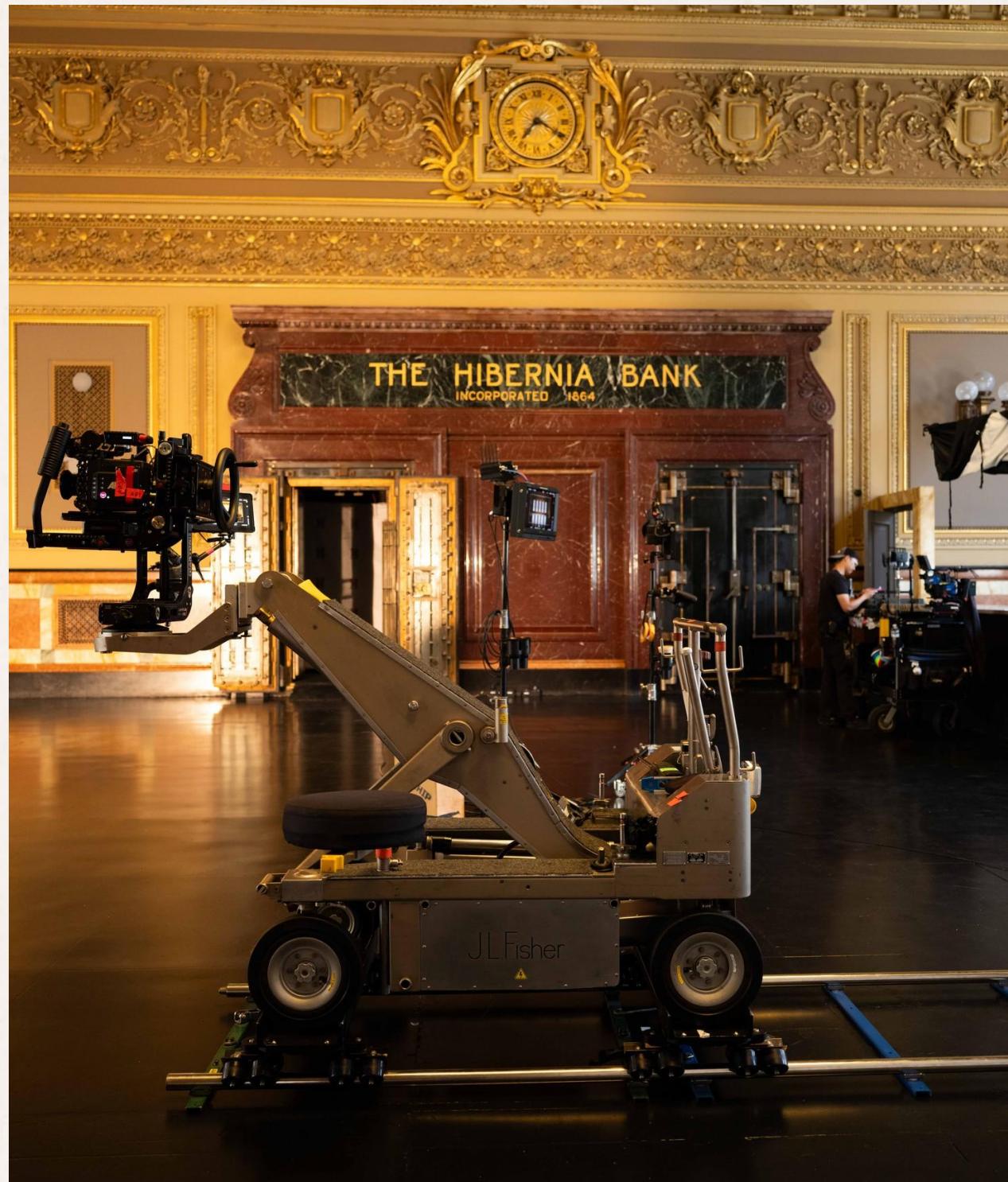
No significant change to the program since its inception.

- Antiquated and not competitive in the incentive-driven industry.
- Over 120 incentives globally competing for productions.

Current Incentive is limited.

- Rebates city fees only and capped at \$600k - does not significantly influence major studio decisions.
- No minimum local spend requirement.
- Requirement to shoot 55–65% of a project in SF is unrealistic and impractical.

Challenge



Fails to attract major large-scale productions and TV series

- The last major production that used our incentive was Hulu's *Chance* in FY16-17 (TV Series) and *Jexi* in FY18-19 (Studio Feature).

Lack of infrastructure development

- Without consistent major production activity we cannot secure investment in a dedicated production stage and other business opportunities.

Significant production runaway.

- Productions choose to film in regions with more attractive incentives.
- Productions only shoot in SF for limited periods of time, if at all, even when the projects are set in SF.

Updated Program Structure



Scene in San Francisco Incentive Program – At a Glance

Category	Details
Minimum Spend	\$500,000 in San Francisco \$250,000 for low-budget projects up to \$3M
Production Requirements	- Minimum 5 days of principal photography in SF - Production office must be located in SF
Rebate Structure	- 10% rebate on qualified SF spend up to \$1M - 20% rebate on qualified SF spend above \$1M - 100% rebate on City agency fees (permits, police, real estate)
Eligible Expenses	- Wages paid to SF residents (capped at \$100K per individual) - Goods/services from SF-based businesses (including post-production)
Maximum Rebate	\$1 million per project
Eligible Project Types	- Feature Films - TV and Web Series (episodes and pilots) - Documentaries

Expected Outcomes

San Francisco Spend

Incentivizes expenditure in San Francisco supporting local restaurants, hotels, and small businesses, and generating increased tax revenue.

Boost in Production Activity

Draws large-scale production resulting in an increase in business, local spend and hires, and long-term industry presence and growth.

Screen Tourism

Leads to enhanced destination marketing and a boost in tourism contributing positively to San Francisco's image and perception.

New Business

Attracts investment in infrastructure development including a dedicated production stage, equipment rentals, and other production facilities.

Job Creation & Workforce Development

Increases employment and skills development opportunities that lead to consistent jobs for locals crew and creatives.

Additional Administrative Code Changes 1/2

Daily Use Fees

Exemptions now include 501(c)(4) and 501(c)(6) organizations.

Film Notification Guidelines

Film Commission will maintain and amend notification guidelines based on impact.

Rebate - Documentary Length

Clarification that documentaries must now be feature length to qualify.

Rebate - Qualified Production Cost

Film Commission will create and maintain guidelines on qualifying costs.

Rebate - Taxes

Taxes are no longer a qualified expenditure.

Rebate - Production Cost

“Under a revenue sharing agreement” captures facilities that are either City-owned or have a revenue sharing agreement with the third-party operator.

Additional Administrative Code Changes 2/2

Rebate - SFPD

Previous cap on officers now removed.

Rebate - Third Party Property

Third-party property owners for film-related activities may qualify, provided there is no suitable City alternative.

Rebate - Skills Training

Production skills training for San Francisco residents now required (First Source Hiring Program remains).

Rebate - On-Screen Credits

On-screen credit and promotional materials now formally required.

Rebate - Real Estate

More flexibility in the types of facilities that qualify (e.g. SFUSD). Monthly rent amount raised from \$5,000 to \$15,000 per RED policy.

Merchandise

Now authorized to license and sell merch.

Conclusion

These updates **modernize** and **better position** San Francisco as competitive within the incentive-driven industry.

This legislation **strengthens** the city's **creative economy**, supports local **businesses and workers**, and allows San Francisco to **compete** globally.





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