

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: May 3, 2017

TO: Honorable Members of the Entertainment and Facilities Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No: 07-1586-S2
Assignment No: 17-04-0502

SUBJECT: Update on the Film Related Data Systems

SUMMARY

On May 18, 2016, the City Council requested FilmL.A., Inc. (FilmLA), the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) and any other relevant City departments to provide quarterly reports to the Entertainment and Facilities Committee on the progress of linking FilmLA's Online Permitting System (OPS) with the City's film related information systems. The City's contract with FilmLA indicates that FilmLA should use best efforts, subject to available funding, to upgrade their OPS to interface with the City's film related information systems, such as the Recreation and Parks (RAP) reservation system, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) Traffic Event Assets Management System (TEAMS), and the Fire Department's film related system (C.F. 07-1586-S2).

The CLA's office submitted a report on December 5, 2016 that provided an overview of the activities that FilmLA and the City departments have undertaken in order to accomplish the goal of linking FilmLA's OPS with the City systems. The report also outlined next steps to achieve this goal. This report provides a status update on these activities.

FilmLA – Upgrades to OPS

FilmLA previously reported that they would be making improvements to OPS to allow FilmLA to accept credit card payments. It was anticipated that the improvements would be completed by January 2017.

However, in November 2016, FilmLA's Board of Directors determined that they should defer accepting credit card payments pending the outcome of two major court cases that are challenging the disclosures with respect to credit card surcharge fees (see *Italian Colors Restaurant v. Harris* and *Expressions Hair Design v. Schneiderman*). The outcome of these cases could impact the ability of an entity to recuperate the fees and costs associated with accepting credit card payments. FilmLA has indicated that it would not be feasible for them to absorb the fees¹ associated with credit card transactions because they do not want to raise their fees to cover this cost. Therefore, they decided to defer accepting credit card payments until a decision was made in these cases.

Furthermore, FilmLA indicated that in order to accept credit card payments they would need to develop a costly interim system that would only be utilized for a few months until they implement their new OPS system. FilmLA will be developing their new OPS system over the next 18 months and this system will be able to accept credit card payments if the outcome of the legal cases allows them to do so. The courts are expected to render a decision in June 2017.

¹ FilmLA indicated that they may have to pay a 3% to 4% fee per credit card transaction.

Next Steps

- FilmLA to continue to monitor the legal cases and to proceed with the development of the new OPS system.

Recreation and Parks - Park Film Office Reservation System

The City Council requested FilmLA to assist the Park Film Office with improving their reservations process and system. The new Reservations module will allow the Park Film Office to take reservations online and streamline their internal processes and FilmLA's permit process. It was anticipated that the Reservations module would be in place by January 1, 2017.

However, there was some delay in implementing the new system due to staff changes at FilmLA. RAP reports that its staff is currently being trained on the Reservations module and that they will be testing the system over the next few weeks. RAP and FilmLA will address any issues with the system during the testing phase in advance of it "going live" to the location managers. They anticipate going live by the end of May.

Next Steps

- FilmLA will hold a training for RAP staff during the first week of May with testing to start shortly thereafter.
- Full implementation of the system by May 31, 2017.

LADOT – TEAMS and Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD)

As of the writing of this report, LADOT has not provided a status update on the TEAMS upgrade. In December 2016 it was reported that LADOT planned to beta test the upgrade from October 2016 through December 2016 and anticipated that the upgraded system would go live in January 2017.

Secondly, there is no update on the upgrades to the LAFD film-related systems as the RAP Reservation module was intended to be implemented before proceeding with any other upgrades. The discussions related to the LAFD system upgrades should resume upon implementation of the RAP Reservation module.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

1. INSTRUCT LADOT to provide a status report on the LADOT Traffic Event Assets Management System upgrade.
2. INSTRUCT LAFD, with assistance from CAO, CLA, FilmLA, and the FilmLA Contract Administrator, to identify requirements for a film-related system that would address LAFD's current needs, including any costs and staffing necessary to develop the new system.

FISCAL IMPACT

The recommendations have no immediate impact on the General Fund.



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