



More summer movie shoots coming to Chicago? Stay tuned

By Paul Merrion
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This could be a super year for filmmaking in Chicago, in more ways than one.

In addition to “Superman: Man of Steel,” several other major motion pictures may film in Chicago this summer or fall, Illinois Film Office Managing Director Betsy Steinberg said.

“A bunch of movies are circling” around final decisions to shoot here, she said at a press event Tuesday to highlight a \$5-million state grant to Cinespace Chicago Film Studios. The West Side studio occupies part of a massive factory formerly owned by Ryerson Steel.

Filmmakers in Los Angeles are “absolutely thrilled” to have the 1.2-million-square-foot facility available for future use, Ms. Steinberg added.

Saying that it will be “a real job-creator,” Gov. Pat Quinn touted the state grant as he stood on a large Cinespace sound stage built for the pilot TV production of “Boss,” a drama about an off-kilter mayor of Chicago. The governor was accompanied by the small-screen mayor and pilot star Kelsey Grammer, who didn't make remarks. Shooting of the eight-episode pilot started a few days ago.

Nick Mirkoupoulos, owner of Cinespace Toronto, a Canadian studio company that owns Cinespace Chicago, said he's building out the first, 450,000-square-foot phase of the project for about \$45 million.

The latest “Superman” sequel by Warner Bros. plans to film outdoor scenes in far west suburban Plano for about eight or 10 weeks, after a few months of building sets, probably to portray the town of Smallville where Superman grew up.

Two other television pilots that filmed in Chicago recently — “The Playboy Club” and “Cooper & Stone” — could learn as soon as next week if they will be aired, Ms. Steinberg said. Approval would mean the series would go into production for more episodes.