Exc. Off.

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November 1, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

COUNTY CHANNEL PLAN

On May 17, 2005, your Board instructed this Office to secure consultant assistance in conducting a cable channel analysis and return to your Board with a resulting proposal on how best to implement a County cable channel. The attached Plan was prepared by our consultant, Susan Herman. Ms. Herman's extensive experience and accomplishments in telecommunications, including her role in leading in the development and management of the City of Los Angeles' channel, are listed on Attachment I.

This memorandum summarizes the key components of the Plan and identifies the first steps to be undertaken in pursuing this Plan, including selection of a coordinator to oversee the initial implementation effort.

Summary of Plan to Establish a County Channel

Consistent with your Board's desire to ensure the broadest possible audience for a County Channel in the least amount of time, the Plan is based upon three guiding principals, or "ABCs." The County Channel must be:

- ***Accessible**: Available to all subscribers within an area;*
- ***Basic**: Included on the Basic (most economical) service tier at no additional subscriber expense; and*
- ***Capable**: Able to transmit live, as well as taped programming.*

The Plan proposes that the County adopt a sequenced and telescoping approach that begins simply and modestly, but builds and expands upon that foundation, so that the greatest number of constituents can view a robust County Channel, with quality programming and public information by and about the County. The Plan includes a strategy for the County to leverage the various resources available to it, including its franchising authority, the innovative proposals of the cable operators, and the cooperation of local jurisdictions. By implementing this Plan, the County Channel could ambitiously reach a viewing audience in excess of one million County cable subscribers within a year. The Plan details the specific strategy and anticipated duration of each stage of the overall implementation approach (Attachment II).

In summary, the proposed implementation sequence is as follows:

- *Launch the County Channel in **Santa Monica**, which is uniquely available now, allowing the County to test this initial implementation on a manageable scale (24,000 subscribers).*

- *Pursue the innovative use of **Video on Demand** (VOD) to deliver a County Channel via pilots North Torrance, Canyon Country, and Stevenson Ranch with Time Warner Cable (11,000 subscribers).*

Depending upon the success and timing of these first important steps, the County Channel would extend its presence to cable systems throughout the County, including:

- *Expand to **other Time Warner cities**, except Los Angeles (100,000 subscribers).*

- *Link with **LA City Interconnect** via the Santa Monica gateway (615,000 subscribers).*

- *Explore links to **neighboring systems in unincorporated areas** (330,000 subscribers).*

- *Expand to **all remaining cities and unincorporated areas**, via VOD or analog based on the results of the pilot (322,000 subscribers).*

The Plan also assumes that the County will continue to carry Board of Supervisors' meetings on KLCS-Channel 58 and webcast those meetings on the County Web site.

Funding

As noted in the Attachment II, the annualized start up and operating costs for launching the Santa Monica pilot are estimated at nearly $59,000. This includes $37,000 for ongoing costs, $20,000 of which is optional based on where certain services are ultimately provided. We believe the Cable TV Franchise Fund is the appropriate funding source for these costs and we will be seeking Board approval to use the Fund for any of these costs which are incurred in 2005-06. Future expenses related to pursuing implementation of the Plan will be addressed through the annual budget process.

Selection of Coordinator to Oversee Initial Implementation

As referenced in the attached Plan, pursuit of this important endeavor requires appointment of a professional coordinator responsible for overseeing completion of identified tasks. In view of Susan Herman's strong qualifications and experience, and her familiarity with the County's organization and resources pertinent to establishing a Channel, we believe that she is the appropriate choice to coordinate initiation of this effort on an interim basis. We will be executing a contract with Ms. Herman under this Office's delegated authority for this purpose.

We believe this Plan provides the most measured and prudent, yet comprehensive, approach to launching a County Channel, with the greatest likelihood of reaching the greatest number of County viewers within the least amount of time. It also takes maximum advantage of existing opportunities for initiating the Channel, while exploring the latest and most promising technologies to further extend the reach, and enhance the quality and versatility, of the County Channel.

Unless otherwise instructed, we will proceed as summarized above and set forth in the attached Plan. We will keep your Board apprised as the Plan proceeds. Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Ms. Herman at (310) 820-3001 or Martin Zimmerman of this Office at (213) 974-1326.

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Attachments (2)

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Director of Consumer Affairs
Director of Internal Services

SUSAN HERMAN
Professional Summary

Susan Herman is the President of SHC, a management and telecommunications consulting firm with clients in the United States and Europe. Formerly, she was General Manager of the Department of Telecommunications for the City of Los Angeles, responsible for the design and development of the City's key telecommunications policies, strategic plans, and projects. Under her leadership, the Department became the #1 net revenue producer in the City. She led the Los Angeles through the complex changes of local and federal telecommunications policy, developed a strategic telecommunications plan for the City, administered telecommunications franchises and contracts for cable television and competitive access providers, and oversaw the negotiations and operation of numerous communications systems including the City's 80-mile Wide Area Network, its voice mail system, and the City's multiple Emmy award-winning television channel, LA Cityview 35. She also chaired the City's Emergency Communications Coordination Task Force. Prior to coming to the City of Los Angeles, she was the head of the Telecommunications department for the City of New York. Her major focus has been on the development of plans, policies and networks for voice, video, and data networks that efficiently deliver services to meet public needs.

Ms. Herman was an appointee to the prestigious National Information Infrastructure (NII) Advisory Council as the representative of the nation's cities and counties. In addition, Ms. Herman has contributed her leadership skills to the Board of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA), where she served as NATOA's President; and she has served on various boards and councils advising on how to succeed in the emerging information economy.

Summary Highlights:

- **President** of **SHC**, a management and telecommunications consulting firm. (1997- present)
- **General Manager** of the **Los Angeles Department of Telecommunications** (1985 - 1997)
- **Appointee** to the **NII Advisory Council,** the President's prestigious 35-member committee advising the Clinton Administration on the development and implementation of the "information superhighway" nationally and globally. (1995 - 1997)
- **Appointee** to the **Telecommunications Working Group** for the City of Santa Monica, CA, responsible for developing a comprehensive strategic telecommunications master plan, including a municipal fiber network, for the City. (Winner of an American Public Works Association 1999 Program of the Year Award) (1997-1998)
- **Chairwoman** of the **Southern California Telecommuting Partnership** (SCTP) a public-private partnership of AT&T, GTE, IBM, Intel, Nortel, Pacific Bell, the City of LA, and the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura; deploying the information infrastructure to achieve economic development, disaster preparedness and transportation management goals. (1994 - present)

- **Steering Committee Member, LA Mayor's Advisory Committee on Technology Implementation** (1995 - 1997)

- **President** of the **National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA)**, an affiliate of the National League of Cities, the largest organization representing local government interests in the United States. (1990 - 1992)

- **Director** of the **Office of Telecommunications of the City of New York** (1983 - 1985)

- **Chief of Staff** at the **New York City Planning Commission**; projects included the redevelopment of Times Square/42nd Street, loft rezoning, major communications projects, including cable franchising and the creation of a Telecommunications Office. (1981 - 1983)

- Lead negotiator for NATOA/National League of Cities/US Conference of Mayors team involved in technical performance standards for cable television, which were adopted by the FCC in 1992.

- Member of the National League of Cities/US Conference of Mayors negotiating team that achieved the amended federal Communications Policy Act, adopted in 1984 and amended in 1992 and 1996.

- Advisor to numerous entities on cable and telecommunications planning, regulatory and policy issues, including: the U.S. President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure; the European Commission, the British, German, Japanese and Thai governments; the Westside Summit Cities (Beverly Hills, Culver City, Santa Monica, and West Hollywood, CA.); the City of Malibu, CA; Flagstaff, Arizona; Pinal County, AZ; Durham, NC; the City of Pasadena, CA. (strategic master plan for telecommunications); the Open Access Alliance, America Online, Verizon and Pacific Bell regarding open access policies; the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury regarding a comprehensive strategy for a telecommunications plan and implementation; the California State University Task Force to develop a new Telecommunications Bachelor of Science degree; the Hispanic Information & Telecommunications Network; the Committee for Communications for the Disabled; the Annenberg School of Communications; the Columbia University Roundtable on Communications; the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences; the National Cable Television Association; the Global Information Infrastructure (GII) Awards; the Interactive Communications Society (IICS); and lecturer at universities and industry seminars throughout the world.

  Graduate of Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, State and Local Executive Program, and UCLA Anderson School of Business, Management of Information Resources Program.

ATTACHMENT II

A Plan
for the
County of Los Angeles
Government Access Cable Channel

October 2005

■ Executive Summary

> "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."
> *The Way of Lao-tzu* by Lao-tzu, Chinese philosopher (604 BC - 531 BC)

The Board of Supervisors has adopted a goal to launch a County Channel and, implicitly, has sought to ensure that the broadest possible audience throughout the County is able to view a County Channel, as soon as possible. Therefore, this Plan is predicated on the premise that a County Channel must achieve three fundamental "ABCs" or public policy principles; that it be:

✓ **Accessible** – available to all subscribers within an area – no "electronic redlining;"

✓ **Basic** – that is, on the Basic service tier, which is the most economic tier for subscribers, and at no additional expense for subscribers; and

✓**Capable** -- of transmitting live as well as taped programming.

In addition, the County and viewers would benefit significantly from a Channel that is on the same channel number consistently throughout all areas.

In order to best accomplish its goal and achieve these principles, this Plan proposes that the County adopt a sequenced and telescoping approach that begins simply and modestly, but builds and expands upon that foundation, so that the greatest number of constituents can view a County Channel, rich with programming and public information by and about the County. This Plan outlines a sequence of events and a timetable for achieving them. It also includes a strategy for the County to leverage the various resources available to it, including its franchising authority, the innovative proposals of the cable operators, and the cooperation of local jurisdictions. By implementing this Plan, the County Channel could ambitiously reach a viewing audience in excess of 1 million County cable subscribers within a year.

The first step would begin in Santa Monica with the launch of a County Channel uniquely available now, followed on closely by the innovative use of Video On Demand (VOD) to deliver a County Channel. The VOD pilot would launch in North Torrance, Canyon Country and Stevenson Ranch. Depending upon the success and timing of these first important steps, the County Channel would extend its presence to cable systems throughout the County. On the following page is a chart demonstrating the dynamic sequence of events are anticipated based on pursuit of this Plan.

Telescoping Sequenced Timetable for County Channel

30-60 days

Begin digitizing & transmitting programming & schedule for Santa Monica to air on Channel 75. Prepare link from SBC Hub to SM.

Finalize transfer negotiations with Cable operators; codify commitment to provide County Channel, permitting VOD consistent with "ABC" principles (Accessible, Basic, & Capable)

60-180 days

Launch on Santa Monica Channel 75. Continue promos & graphic bulletin board content; review County-content offered by Santa Monica (MWD, MTA, Ford theater, etc.) and others.

TimeWarner to launch VOD pilot in Canyon Country, N. Torrance & Stevenson Ranch. Assess compliance with the "ABC" principles.

180 days +

Expand TimeWarner VOD pilot to other TimeWarner systems. Engage other operators (i.e., Charter, Cox, etc.).

Via Santa Monica headend location, link with LA City Interconnect; investigate viable links to neighboring systems in unincorporated areas.

Year-end...

County Channel available to *all* subscribers (via VOD or analog, depending upon the success of VOD pilot to meet "ABC's")

Santa Monica + 24,000 subs
VOD Pilot - 3 Areas + 11,000 subs
Other TimeWarner cities in County (excl. LA) + 100,000 subs
LA City interconnect, incl. TW & others + 615,000 subs
Post transfer add'l TW systems in County + 330,000 subs
Charter, Cox & others (all unincorp. & cities) + 322,000 subs

■ Overview & Background

As the number one, most populous county in the nation, the County of Los Angeles has an unrivaled obligation and opportunity to provide vital public information, deliver essential services, and demonstrate its leadership among the many local jurisdictions and constituents who rely upon it. Recognizing there is reliable, effective and demonstrated method to fulfill this challenging mandate, the County of Los Angeles has repeatedly expressed support for the creation of a so-called government access channel, "the County Channel," which would be viewable by cable subscribers across the County. In various reports, such a County Channel has been envisioned to be the portal through which live meeting coverage, timely public information, and informative programming by and about County departments, services and other public benefits, may be found. Motions from the Board of Supervisors, reports by County departments and expert consultants have underscored the value and purpose of a County Channel, to be carried on the cable systems operating by the franchising authority of the County and throughout the County as a geographic whole. [1]

There is a unique window of opportunity for the County at this moment in time because a major transfer of ownership is proposed by the cable franchisees, essentially creating a consolidated ownership from many cable systems into one single company that would serve approximately 80% of the County. For the County and its Department of Consumer Affairs, the transfers of ownership applications provide an opportunity within a limited 120-day review period, to ensure compliance with existing franchise provisions, such as the requirement to carry a government access channel. The transfers also provide the cable operator with a valuable opportunity to demonstrate their compliance and commitment, and even more creatively, their civic-mindedness and enthusiasm to ensure all constituents of the County are served by the uniquely local medium of cable television. Government access on cable television is the only medium of its kind to enable such a vital link.

The transfers of ownership, if approved, present the cable company with an unprecedented opportunity to consolidate their systems, achieve an economy of scale, and build upon existing infrastructure to achieve even greater technological efficiencies.

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[1] For example, *see* Board of Supervisors' Agenda for May 17, 2005, Item Nos. 6 and 12; CAO Memorandum "County Government Access Channel" dated June 25, 2004; Consultant's report, "County Cable Channel Information & Options" dated June 2004, and TMC "Progress Report" dated July 15, 2003.

Fortunately, this window of opportunity comes at a time when it is technologically feasible and viable to have a County Channel reach cable subscribers within the full length and breadth of the County. In the future, and following on some innovative suggestions from the cable companies, the County may even realize a pivotal portal to provide – *on consumer demand* – County news, information and programming by and about County services. This is an exciting and promising time for a County Channel to begin. Moreover, the goal to have a County Channel is reasonable, achievable and will meet community needs and interests.

Therefore, the following Plan is proposed for the design, launch and operation of a County Channel, with a sequence of timetables and steps that include negotiations, technical design and engineering, program development, on-going operation, and budget and resource considerations. Whereas two alternative approaches are considered, it is recommended that the County initially proceed with the approach that allows its goals to be realized most broadly and expeditiously, following a sequential or telescoping plan of implementation. Working with the cooperation and compliance of the cable operators, the County may expand and enhance the Channel technologically so it may enrich and inform constituents throughout the County in the months and years to come.

■ **The Plan – Decision Point: Approaches to Launching a County Channel**

The authority of the County is vast as it relates to public safety, welfare, and general public benefit services; yet the County's direct authority over cable is limited to the franchisees serving the unincorporated communities of the County. Therefore, the approach the County ultimately takes will likely incorporate a balanced measure of compliance *and* cooperation from the cable companies, as well as cooperation from local jurisdictions, in order to have true value and success for cable subscribers and County constituents.

Fundamental to any approach are three recommended "ABC" principles to be achieved for the County Channel. The Channel should be:

✓ **Accessible** – available to all subscribers within an area;

✓ **Basic** – that is, on the Basic service tier, which is the most economic tier for subscribers, and at no additional expense for subscribers; and

✓**Capable** -- of transmitting live as well as taped programming.

Also, to the greatest extent possible, the County Channel should have the same numerical designation (e.g., Channel 75) on every cable system. This will be helpful for consumers by providing a simple, quick method for viewers to locate the County Channel as well as make it more efficient for marketing and branding purposes.

- **Approach A - "County-Specific"**

One approach is for the County to create a government access channel through the exercise of its authority pursuant to County Code sections.[2] This would essentially mean that all subscribers within the County-authorized franchise areas (the unincorporated areas of the County) could receive the County Channel within approximately sixty (60) days of notifying the County franchisees of their obligation to do so. These franchise areas are located throughout all five Supervisor districts in the County.

According to the most recent data from the Department of Consumer Affairs, approximately 115,000 cable subscribers would be able to view the County Channel using this approach. This audience of 115,000 unincorporated area subscribers is in contrast to an estimated 1.4 million subscribers, the total number of cable subscribers throughout the 88 incorporated cities in the County.

It is noteworthy to consider, however, that the cost to operate a government channel is not typically scaled to the size of the viewing audience. The cost for a live government meeting or a half-hour informational program is essentially the same, regardless if it's for an audience of 115,000 or over a million. Therefore, the investment made by the cable companies and the County will yield the greatest value when the broadest audience is served. That is why an alternative, more broadly based approach is recommended.

This "County-specific" approach is not exclusive to other approaches, and of course, any approach must include the audience from these important unincorporated communities. The County Channel will provide a critical, efficient link particularly for communities physically isolated or widely dispersed. Balancing the equities of reaching the broadest possible County audience in the most expeditious manner should be the County's top priority. As discussed in the next approach entitled, "Countywide Pilot and

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[2] Relevant County Code sections include, but are not limited to, Sections 16.68.040, 16.68.070, 16.68.080, and 16.68.090, as well as various subsections of Chapter 16.60. pertaining to the enforcement authority of the County in the event of non-compliance by a franchisee.

Interconnect," there are ways to achieve the guiding "ABC" principles and reach the broadest audience rather quickly and efficiently, while ensuring full benefits to the unincorporated communities – all within a reasonable timeframe.

- **Approach B - "Countywide Pilot and Interconnect"**

An alternative approach is for the County to implement a sequenced timetable and telescoping steps, leveraging various resources available to the County, through its franchising authority and with the cooperation of local jurisdictions. Using such an approach, the County could build upon each sequence and telescope out to reach a broader audience, in an expeditious manner. Specifically, the first step in the sequence would be to take advantage of a dedicated, full-time channel that is already available in the City of Santa Monica. Because of the generosity and foresight of Santa Monica City leaders to require a regional channel, a channel is available and may be programmed by the County, commencing in thirty (30) to sixty (60) days. At this time, there is no other comparable channel in any other area that is fully available to the County except this channel in Santa Monica.

As an additional benefit, Santa Monica is uniquely positioned as a keystone location for cable systems countywide, because it is the site of the "head-end" of the Adelphia system. The head-end is a key distribution point for a cable system. This particular Santa Monica head-end links with the Los Angeles City interconnect and all franchised cable systems in the City of Los Angeles. The interconnect, with its capacious fiber design, currently carries the Los Angeles City government channel "35" as well as the community channel "36." Between them, the cable systems serving the cities of Santa Monica and Los Angeles reach nearly two-thirds of a million cable subscribers. The maps in ***Attachment A*** illustrate that the Santa Monica and Los Angeles City cable systems are located and serve subscribers within all five Supervisor districts.

The Los Angeles City interconnect also serves as a gateway to interconnections with cable systems across the County. For example, from the Los Angeles City franchise area in Chatsworth, a link exists to a sister system in the City of Santa Clarita. This link represents a bridge upon which expansion of the County Channel could be built, with the cooperation and civic commitment of the single cable company that connects and serves both Chatsworth and Santa Clarita.

With collaborative planning and engineering by the cable operators, as exemplified by the Chatsworth-Santa Clarita link, the County could realize inclusion of the cable subscribers from the unincorporated areas as part of this interconnection approach. That is why the "County-specific" approach is not mutually exclusive to the "Countywide Pilot and Interconnect" approach.

Although Santa Monica is not a large system and represents a limited audience of 24,000 subscribers, it creates a friendly harbor for the County to initially test and perfect its ability to fully and daily program a channel beginning with a pilot launch. After the pilot launch, interconnections with the City of Los Angeles system and other systems could follow close on, based upon negotiations between the relevant parties involved.

Interconnection from Santa Monica to the Los Angeles City interconnect will most quickly be accomplished with support from the City of Los Angeles, including members of the Information Technology and General Services Committee of the City Council, and a negotiated understanding with the Los Angeles cable operators who built and now operate the interconnect for the City. Assuming full cooperation, the County Channel could be viewed by nearly two-thirds of a million cable subscribers within approximately 120 to 180 days of initiating this approach.

- **An Enhanced Approach - "Video on Demand"**

In a spirit of innovation and "thinking outside the box," cable operators have discussed offering a County Channel as a "Video on Demand" (VOD) service. Such an offer is consistent with and complementary to a sequenced and telescoping approach and, if proven successful on a pilot basis, is an enhanced approach that may be the most expeditious, innovative and broad-based method to deliver a County Channel.

Video on Demand is a digital service usually carried on the expanded or pay tiers of a cable system. The benefit of VOD is that it offers subscribers a myriad of choices, choices that are able to be selected from a menu according to the viewer's preferences and sometimes even according to their own time schedule. Some industry experts have predicted that in the future, cable VOD will become as common as Burger King's "have it your way" hamburger.

The cable operators have estimated that approximately 75% of cable households countywide have digital service, capable of viewing VOD programming. However

public policy questions are posed for the 25% that don't have digital service if a County Channel is to be made available using VOD: When may those 25% of subscribers receive such a service; will it be available on the basic tier, at no extra cost; and will the VOD service be capable of transmitting live programming? These are pivotal issues to be addressed if the fundamental "ABC" principles contained in the beginning of this Plan are to be embraced. Of course, other technical, programming, budgetary and staff training issues would also need to be addressed if County Channel programming is made available using VOD. This is a promising approach for the County to consider, assuming the County can see demonstrated evidence that the technical capability of VOD combined with the civic commitment of the cable operators will address and overcome the issues raised.

Taking the lead with a VOD proposal for the County Channel, Time Warner recently stated that they are prepared to consider launching a County Channel using VOD in the unincorporated County communities that they currently serve in Canyon Country, North Torrance, and Stevenson Ranch.[3] Moreover, the County Channel would be placed on the same numerical channel throughout these systems. To address the County's concerns related to accessibility to the VOD format, Time Warner has stated they are prepared to provide, at no cost, a digital converter to those basic-only customers who request it for purposes of viewing County Channel programming. Assuming Time Warner broadly and perpetually promotes the offer of the free digital converters, offers free assistance in the installation of these converters, and broadly promotes the County Channel programming available, this VOD Pilot may be the springboard to a swiftly unfolding enhanced approach that may reach even more subscribers in the most expeditious manner.

If demonstrated as successful, the VOD Pilot may evolve into a countywide VOD Project, providing a County Channel as a VOD service to all the unincorporated and incorporated areas of the County. This is a promising enhancement to the County Channel Plan and the cable franchisees should be encouraged to demonstrate how VOD would help facilitate the goals of the Plan and meet the challenge of providing a countywide Channel, broadly and expeditiously.

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[3] According to the "2005 Annual Cable Report – Status Report" prepared by the Department of Consumer Affairs, the three Time Warner systems in Canyon Country, North Torrance, and Stevenson Ranch collectively serve approximately 11,000 subscribers; and of those, approximately 8% are basic-only subscribers, necessitating a digital converter in order to view County Channel programming using VOD.

If one imagines VOD as a portal through which one may select from a menu of programming (e.g., live meetings, live and taped programs, bulletins and public notices, special events, and archived programming, etc.) the concept of a County Channel grows exponentially with VOD. One County Channel can become the portal or threshold to a menu of County programming choices for subscribers and County constituents. At this writing, there is no other comparable government channel being provided as a VOD service. Nonetheless, the innovative proposal for a VOD approach should be considered – if demonstrated as successful in the Pilot phase – as an approach that may enhance the current goals and fundamental principles for a County Channel. Also, if proven successful, the County's needs and interests as they relate to VOD, should be included when franchise transfers and renewals are negotiated along with flexible, expandable capacity for government uses and other public benefits.

- **For All Approaches - "Existing Relationships and Partnerships"**

Obviously, the County has information and programming relevant to cable subscribers and non-subscribers alike. Therefore, at a minimum, the County is wise to continue carriage of the Board of Supervisors' meetings on KLCS-Channel 58 as well as webcasting those meetings on the County website. Whether on an interim or long-term basis, these alternative media give County constituents the fullest opportunity to view County information and programming.

The County's cost to bring the live feed from the Board of Supervisors' meetings to the Hollywood Hub where broadcasters, KLCS-Channel 58, and cable companies may access the County feed, is already included in the County budget.[4] The Hollywood Hub, located near Sunset and Gower, is a centralized point where television and broadcast signals are sent, and then, in turn, picked up for use or rebroadcast by cable and the television industry. Therefore, an important and synergistic link is achieved through the County's continuation of its live feed to the Hollywood Hub. It creates an easy access point for programming to be sent by the County and then optionally picked up by the cable operators and broadcasters for distribution to their viewing audiences.

Furthermore, according to data collected from the USC Annenberg School of Communication, approximately 75% of Americans use the Internet; and 65% use the Internet at home. The average Internet user is online 12 hours per week. And the

[4] *See* the Cable Television Franchise Fund, 2005-2006 Final Adopted Budget. The financing source for these uses comes from franchise fee revenues.

fastest growing populations of Internet users are Latinos and African-Americans – thus a closing of the "digital divide." Almost all users report that the Internet is the first place they go for information. Whereas this data reflects national, not County, trends – the message is clear: webcasts are becoming a viewing choice for many. Although not the primary subject of this Plan, the County could expand its webcast programming, either originating a County Channel on its website or duplicating a County Channel on the website if desired. The County's current inventory of resources could enable such webcasting to occur rather efficiently, effectively and immediately, if desired.

Continuation of the KLCS-Channel 58 relationship, the provision of the Hollywood Hub feed, and webcasting are additional outlets that may continue at their current cost or be expanded, as resources and interests dictate. Most importantly, the three outlets of KLCS-Channel 58, the Hollywood Hub feed, and webcasting cost-effectively extend the audience base for the County while creating varied venues to cross-promote the County Channel once it is launched, whether as a traditional channel or as a VOD service. These varied venues are a marketing benefit for the County and the cable operators alike.

The current arrangements with KLCS-Channel 58, webcasting, and the Hollywood Hub are excellent existing resources that help the County reach out to the farthest geographic borders. In addition, there are other partners interested and willing to assist the County expand its abilities and achieve its goals for a County Channel. Entities such as the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) present technological, equipment and programming resources that the County may wish to make arrangements to use. For example, LACOE has two studios located in Downey for the production of live, call-in, and taped programming, and a half dozen video conferencing centers in wide-ranging locations such as Castaic, Downey, Palmdale and Beverly Hills. Similarly, the City of Los Angeles has studio facilities for the production of live, call-in, and taped programming located just blocks from the Hall of Administration.

In summary, these synergistic relationships and partnerships help extend the value and impact of a County Channel as well as complement the County's goal to provide meaningful programming to all constituents in the County. Therefore, these relationships and partnerships should be maintained and nurtured.

■ The Plan – Next Steps and Timetable

After determining the preferred approach, the timetable and next steps for the County Channel may be undertaken within five thematic categories:

1. The regulatory and policy steps necessary to launch a County Channel.
2. The programming and content issues for the County Channel.
3. The technical and engineering issues for the County Channel.
4. The budget and resources necessary for the County Channel.
5. The organizational framework that is the lynchpin for overseeing and coordinating the Plan and related activities.

The projected timetable for each thematic category will vary, but in concert, steps should transition from the short-term (30 to 60 days), to the intermediate term (60 to180 days); and the long-term (180 days and beyond). A chart of tasks and timetable are contained in ***Attachment B***.

▪ 1. Regulatory & Policy issues:

Short-term:

a. Officially notify the operators of the County's intent to launch a County Channel via an advisement from the Department of Consumer Affairs .

b. Convene a meeting of the cable operators to discuss the Plan and compliance expectations; establish timetable for compliance. Meet with local jurisdictions in preparation of a launch.

c. Request the the Department of Consumer Affairs to prepare additional policies, regulatory provisions or related terms and conditions (e.g., inclusion of any franchise transfer-related directives, etc.) that may be appropriate and necessary. County consultants, counsel and related departments should assist and advise, accordingly.

Intermediate term:

d. Prepare a report and draft language for adoption, as needed, on additional policies, regulations, terms and conditions.

e. Monitor and enforce compliance timetable and requirements.

f. Negotiate and draft terms and conditions for the County Channel as may be necessary for contractual relationships or partnerships with other cities, the cable companies or other relevant entities.

Long-term:

g. Continue to monitor and enforce compliance.

h. Review policies to ensure goals are achieved. Redraft as needed.

i. Prepare provisions for future franchises and franchise renewals that ensure capacity for the County to government programmed content.

- **2. Programming & Content issues:**

Short-term:

a. Identify and centrally locate existing programming to air on the County Channel.

b. Ensure programming is ready for airing (e.g., digitization, formatting, etc.)

c. Prepare logo or County Channel "brand" and bulletin board content.

d. Establish an initial schedule for live, taped and bulletin board content to air.

e. Develop a strategy and timetable to promote the County Channel.

f. As applicable, prepare programming and monitor preparation of content for webcasting, broadcasting and cablecasting for the County.

Intermediate term:

g. Review programming available from other sources and prepare strategy and budget, as needed, for program acquisition or additional program development as well as staffing/contracting recommendations.

h. Survey town councils and other relevant sources for programming to air on the County Channel.

i. Develop draft policies for users of the County Channel (including, but not limited to, eligibility requirements and responsibilities; training and certification; content requirements; format standards; scheduling and playback procedures; and other procedures regarding programming for the County Channel).

j. In collaboration with counsel and other advisors, ensure appropriate procedures for program ownership, content rights and responsibilities, and programming distribution.

Long-term:

k. Develop scheduling priorities and programming goals: series programs, news, live programming, meeting coverage

l. Assist users of the County Channel in development of programming.

m. Identify sources of underwriting, grants or other funds that may be used to further enhance and develop programming and Channel promotion.

n. Develop a method to survey viewer interests and needs.

o. Review and revise policies for users, as appropriate.

- **3. Technical and Engineering issues:**

Short-term:

a. Request the Department of Consumer Affairs and appropriate consultants to meet with the cable operators regarding the technical design and engineering of the infrastructure to launch the County Channel.

b. Develop the strategy, related costs, and timetable for the interconnection of the County Channel.

c. Should the VOD proposal become a timely and viable approach, the strategy, costs and timetable associated with this technology must be developed.

d. Prepare a list of and budget for the technical and engineering specifications related to equipment, maintenance and ongoing operation of the County Channel. This should include a strategy, budget and timetable for roll-out, maintenance and replacement over time, as well as lease and purchase options, and staffing/contracting requirements.

e. As applicable, prepare technical specifications and monitor engineering of webcasting, broadcasting and cablecasting of the County programming.

Intermediate term:

f. Continuously monitor the implementation of the technical design and engineering of the infrastructure for the County Channel.

g. Prepare technical requirements and priorities for continued expansion and refinement of operations.

Long-term:

h. Review maintenance and replacement of equipment.

i. Continuously review technology for efficiencies and economy in technical and engineering operations, and make recommendations accordingly.

j. Develop a strategy and timetable to ensure technical operations and engineering remains state of the art.

- **4. Budget and Resource issues:**

Short-term:

a. Identify the budget and source(s) to initially launch the County Channel. (For example, the County's cost to implement the County Channel as a pilot in Santa Monica is estimated at $59,000 in year one.[5] Also, should the VOD proposal become a timely and viable approach, County costs associated with this technology must be identified.)

b. Prepare a budget for cablecasting and webcasting of the County programming, including budget strategy and timetable for any expansion.[6]

Intermediate term:

c. Identify, review feasibility, and develop procedures to secure alternative or new sources of funding and potential funding levels available (e.g., franchise fees, subscriber fees, grants, underwriting, partnerships or exchanges with other governmental entities); and identify the timetable for when such funds may become available.

d. Review purchasing and contracting procedures to ensure operational agility and accountability for the County Channel.

Long-term:

e. Review and audit franchise fees, other revenues and funding sources that may ensure continued operation along with appropriate state of the art expansion.

f. Review contractual, lease and purchase procedures and alternatives to ensure ongoing efficiency and effective use of limited resources.

- **5. Organizational Framework issues: (Overarching timetable)**

a. Assign the preceding short-term tasks to appropriate County departments and/or consultants and contractors.

b. Identify a coordinator responsible to monitor and oversee task fulfillment and completion.

c. Review and develop recommendations regarding the staffing and funding needed, including for the areas of policy and regulation, technical design and engineering, programming, and general on-going operation and maintenance of the County Channel.

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[5] ***Attachment C*** to this Plan includes an initial estimate of first year costs to launch the pilot in Santa Monica.

[6] For example, Bruce Arditte of NTT, Inc, has estimated that originating webcasting (24/7) of County programming could cost approximately $300,000 to $350,000 in year one.

d. Review the existing organizational structure of the County to determine the best configuration to achieve the goals of the County (e.g., consider roles and organizational configuration for franchising, technical operations, programming and promotion, as well as the creation of Task Forces and Advisory Groups to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among responsible entities).[7]

e. Review the organizational structure, including budget and operation, of other relevant entities that may serve as a model for the County.

f. Prepare recommendations concerning partnerships and collaborations with other localities, the cable companies, and other entities that may enhance the structure and operation of the County Channel.

Periodic updates and reports culled from each of these areas will make it possible to literally and figuratively see the County Channel from inception to reception on cable television sets countywide.

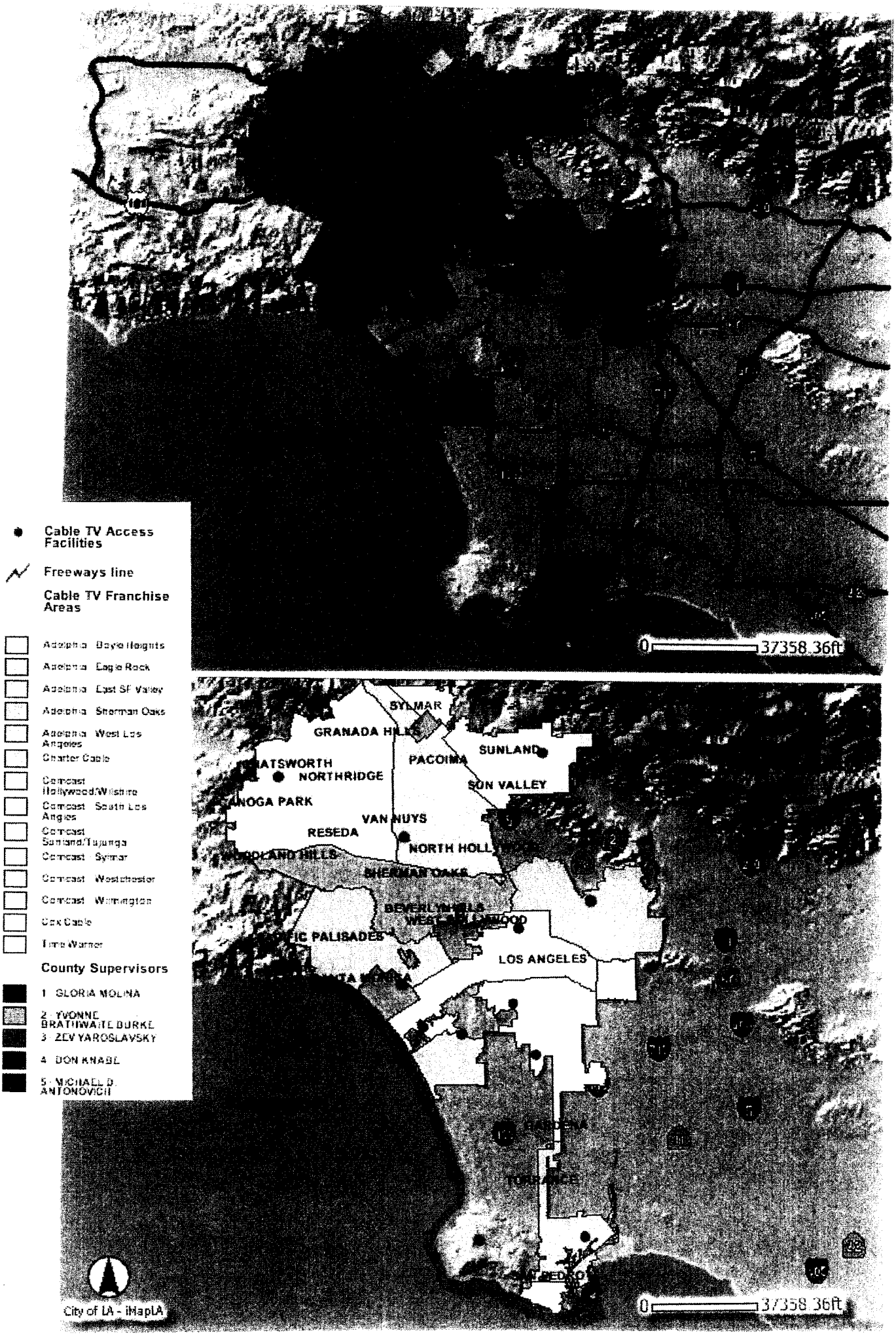
[7] In a majority of county and city jurisdictions, responsibilities for cable franchising, public right-of-way management and cable channel operations are located within a single agency or department. Although no specific structure is recommended at this point, the County should consider what, if any, operational and economic efficiencies may be achieved with organizational consolidation versus the existing organizational structure.

Attachments on the Following Pages:

A. Map of Los Angeles City Cable Franchise Areas (LA City Interconnect participants)

B. Chart of Tasks & Timetable

C. Estimated Budget for County Channel – Santa Monica Pilot Launch


Cable TV Access Facilities
Freeways line
Cable TV Franchise Areas
Adelphia Boyle Heights
Adelphia Eagle Rock
Adelphia East SF Valley
Adelphia Sherman Oaks
Adelphia West Los Angeles
Charter Cable
Comcast Hollywood/Wilshire
Comcast South Los Angles
Comcast Sunland/Tujunga
Comcast Sylmar
Comcast Westchester
Comcast Wilmington
Cox Cable
Time Warner
County Supervisors
1 GLORIA MOLINA
2 YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
3 ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
4 DON KNABE
5 MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
0
37358.36ft
SYLMAR
GRANADA HILLS
SUNLAND
PACOIMA
NORTHRIDGE
SON VALLEY
VAN NUYS
RESEDA
SHERMAN OAKS
LOS ANGELES
City of LA - iMapLA

Short-term: 30-60 days	Intermediate Term: 60-180 days	Long-Term: 180 days +
Regulatory & Policy Issues		
> Officially notify cable operators of County Channel	> Draft language for adoption (policies, regulations, terms & conditions, as needed)	> Continue monitoring & enforcement
> Convene meetings with cable operators to discuss compliance expectations & timetable.	> Monitor & enforce compliance timetable & requirements	> Review policies to ensure goals are being met.
> Prepare additional policies, regulatory provisions, terms & conditions, including transfer requirements.	> Negotiate draft terms & conditions for contractual relationships or partnerships with others	> Prepare provisions for future franchises & renewals to ensure future County capacity.
Programming & Content Issues		
> Identify and centrally locate library of programming	> Identify programming and related resources from other sources	> Develop scheduling priorities & program goals (e.g., series, news, live coverage, info for bulletin board)
> Establish schedule, ready programming as needed.	> Develop draft policies for users (e.g., eligibility, training, format standards, scheduling, etc.)	> Assist users in developing programming.
> Develop strategy & timetable for Channel promotion	> Ensure copyright, ownership & content rights.	> Develop & implement viewer surveys.
> Prepare content for webcasting & broadcasting		
Technical & Engineering Issues		
> Develop technical design & infrastructure engineering in collaboration with cable operators, other entities.	> Monitor implementation of design and engineering.	> Review maintenance, testing & operations.
> Develop strategy & timetable for interconnection.	> Test and verify signal to ensure ubiquitous, state of the art coverage	> Review technology for efficiencies and economy; make recommendations as needed.
> Prepare technical and engineering specifications for equipment, master control, maintenance & replacement.	> Prepare requirements for technical expansion and refinement of operations.	> Develop strategy & timetable to ensure state of the art performance & operations.
Budget & Resource Issues		
> Identify budget and sources to initially launch the County Channel.	> Identify, review feasibility and secure alternative or new sources of funding & project funding levels (e.g, franchise fees, subscriber fees, grants, partnerships, underwriting, etc.)	> Review and audit franchise fees and other revenue & funding sources.
> Prepare budgets for webcasting, broadcasting & cablecasting, including budget strategy and timetable for expansion.	> Review purchasing & contracting procedures to ensure operational agility and accountability.	> Review contractual, lease and purchase arrangements to ensure efficiency and effective use of limited resources.
Organizational & Framework Issues		
> Assign tasks to appropriate County Staff, consultants, contractors.	> Review staffing & contractors needed.	> Review recommendations for partnerships, collaborations or other relationships that may enhance the structure, operation and funding for the County Channel.
> Appoint a coordinator responsible to monitor & oversee task fulfillment and completion.		

LA COUNTY CHANNEL PILOT LAUNCH IN SANTA MONICA:
ESTIMATED 1ST YEAR OPERATING AND START-UP COSTS

On-going Expenses	**Amount**	**Unit Cost**	**Total**	
SBC monthly expense	12	$ 750.00	$ 9,000.00	
Verizon monthly expense	12	$ 636.50	$ 7,638.00	
Subtotal:				**$ 16,638.00**
OPTIONAL On-going Expenses -				
Santa Monica willing to perform at County's Direction:				
Preparing programs to air (8 hours per week)	12	$ 500.00	$ 6,000.00	
Scheduling Channel (4 hours per week)	12	$ 400.00	$ 4,800.00	
Creating Bulletin Board messages (25 messages per month)	12	$ 500.00	$ 6,000.00	
Tribune Media Services listing	12	$ 125.00	$ 1,500.00	
TV Guide Channel listings	12	$ 75.00	$ 900.00	
Supplies	12	$ 100.00	$ 1,200.00	
Subtotal:			$ 20,400.00	
TOTAL Ongoing Expenses:				**$ 37,038.00**
One-time charges				
SBC installation		$ 726.00		
Verizon installation		$ 500.00		
*Playback system pro-rata share		$ 20,200.00		
TOTAL One-time Charges:		$ 21,426.00		
			Subtotal On-going:	**$ 37,038.00**
			***Subtotal One-time:**	**$ 21,426.00**
			Grand Total:	**$ 58,464.00**

** If LA County originates playback from Hall of Administration, then this cost may be approx. $5,000 for equipment needed for Santa Monica to receive the feed, monitor, adjust video and audio levels of the feed, etc.*