

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



KAREN BASS
MAYOR



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AGENCY

CITY HALL EAST
200 N MAIN ST, ROOM 1400
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
213.978.3311

ita.lacity.gov

TED M. ROSS
GENERAL MANAGER
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

MARYAM ABBASSI
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

BHAVIN PATEL
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

EDUARDO MAGOS
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

MARIA RAMOS
ACTING ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

May 15, 2026

REF: EXE-110-26

Honorable Members of the City Council
City of Los Angeles
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attn: Government Operations Committee

Subject: **COUNCIL FILE NO. 26-0074 - LA CITY VIEW 35 / CONTRACTS OVERVIEW / UPCOMING PROJECTS / BROADCAST STANDARDS**

Pursuant to C.F. 26-0074, the Information Technology Agency (ITA) was instructed to report on our long-term plans for LA CityView 35, including an overview of contract management and a summary of upcoming projects.

BACKGROUND

LA CityView 35 has served as the City's official television station since 1989 providing important government access to Angelenos. Since 1989, media consumption and popular communications channels have dramatically changed. As such, the ITA has been working tirelessly to modernize LA CityView 35's content creation and distribution channels to better serve the public and our elected officials. In response to Council's request, this report outlines ITA's multi-year strategic roadmap to modernize, expand, and strengthen this important service so that it increasingly serves as a multi-channel platform for connecting residents to our City government.

LA CITYVIEW 35 IS TRANSFORMING TO KEEP PACE WITH TODAY'S DIGITAL LANDSCAPE

As the digital landscape shifts away from linear cable, LA CityView 35 must evolve to include reaching Angelenos where they spend their time—on their mobile devices and social media feeds. This fundamental change in media consumption has required LA CityView 35 to make the all-to-familiar transition from traditional broadcast models toward on-demand, interactive digital content that prioritizes accessibility for a diverse Los Angeles population and demographic. Modernizing our infrastructure, approach, and content strategy has become a strategic necessity to ensure that critical City of Los Angeles updates, public services, and elected office initiatives remain visible to an increasingly "mobile-first" and tech-savvy constituency. By integrating advanced social media strategies with our Emmy-winning broadcast legacy, LA CityView 35 is working

hard to modernize and bridge the communication gaps between City Hall and the residents we serve. Ultimately, this evolution will be vital to maintaining LA CityView 35 as a trusted, relevant, and responsive public information source in an increasingly fragmented digital age.

Key Statistics on the Changes in the Media Industry:

- Media Market Share Has Changed - As of December 2025, streaming reached a record 47.5% share of all television viewing, while cable fell to an all-time low of 20.2% (Nielsen News Center, *Streaming Shatters Multiple Records in December 2025 with 47.5% of TV Viewing*, January 2026)
- Cable Cord Cutting Has Accelerated - By the end of 2026, it is projected that 41.6% of the U.S. population (approximately 112.9 million people) will have "cut the cable cord" entirely and don't access cable TV (eMarketer Insider Intelligence, *U.S. Cord-Cutting Households to Hit 80.7 Million by Year-End 2026*, January 2026)
- LA CityView 35 Is Changing Tactics to Reach Under 30s - Only 16% of adults under 30 maintain a cable or satellite subscription (Pew Research Center, *Streaming Dominance: Pew Data Shows Americans Leaving Cable Behind*, September 2025)
- News Discovery Has Changed - Roughly 49% of U.S. adults now say they get their news because they "happen to come across it" (typically via social media feeds), rather than seeking it out from a specific broadcast such as a once a week broadcast (Pew Research Center, *What Types of News Do Americans Seek Out or Happen to Come Across?*, April 2026)
- Short-Form Content is Dominating Media Consumption - Engagement with short-form video (Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts) is now the most effective way to reach constituents, with 81% of consumers stating they prefer learning about services through short, digestible videos (Wyzowl, *The State of Video Marketing 2026*, April 2026)
- Americans Turning Away From Traditional Local News - In 2025, only 21% of Americans said they follow local news "very closely," a significant drop from 37% in 2016 (Pew Research Center, *Local News Fact Sheet: Attention to Local News and Media Patterns*, April 2026)

To remain relevant, leading government access stations across America are pivoting to a "push" model—delivering content directly to residents' social feeds—rather than waiting for them to "pull" information by navigating to Channel 35. With over 80 million U.S. households projected to be without a traditional TV subscription by the end of 2026, failing to modernize LA CityView 35's social and digital presence would be "going dark" for a large portion of Los Angeles residents. With the leadership and support of our Los

Angeles City Council, LA CityView 35 is continuing to modernize our media offerings for the public.

LA CITYVIEW 35 IS ALIGNING WITH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES

ITA's long-term strategy for LA CityView 35 is designed to align the station with best practices used by leading municipal television stations nationwide. This approach is informed by surveys, research, benchmarking, and direct engagement with peer cities, and is intended to improve the station's operational efficiency and expand public access to City information.

To inform this strategy, ITA performed the following comprehensive research:

- Surveyed Elected Office & City Department Communication Leaders - Delivered key survey to solicit feedback from all communication leads and Public Information Officers across our elected offices and City of Los Angeles departments
- Conducted Peer Analysis of 75 Key U.S. & California Cities - Conducted a peer analysis of municipal television stations in the 50 largest cities in America and the 25 largest cities in California
- Reached Out to Respected Industry Associations - Participated in industry conferences hosted by the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO), the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA), and the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)
- Conducted Meetings with Award Winning Government Stations - Met with high-performing and NATOA/CAPIO/Emmy award-winning municipal stations, including Seattle, San Francisco, Long Beach, and Pasadena, to study their practices
- Solicited Input & Feedback from LA CityView 35 Professionals - ITA managers met with LA CityView staff and contractors to solicit their feedback, shared ideas, and discuss methods to both improve internal operations and modernize content for changing Los Angeles constituent preferences

This research identified some key gaps between LA CityView 35's current operations and several industry best practices and standards. In response, the ITA identified a series of key initiatives to deliver better media services and align the station with proven municipal media organizations nationwide.

SUMMARY OF LA CITYVIEW 35 MODERNIZATION PROJECTS

A. Category #1 - Modernizing LA CityView's Infrastructure & Tools

LA CityView 35 is modernizing its aging broadcast infrastructure to support the City's evolving media and communication needs. Following a comprehensive audit of systems and equipment, ITA is upgrading core infrastructure and replacing end-

of-life equipment to improve reliability, scalability, and security while aligning with Citywide IT standards. Where appropriate, ITA is also evaluating modern cloud-based solutions that can improve operational efficiency while reducing ongoing maintenance costs. These efforts have already resulted in ~\$125,000 in annual savings.

To date, the station has completed several improvements in this category:

- Analyzed & inventoried existing broadcast equipment and systems to prioritize infrastructure upgrades
- Migrated LA CityView 35 servers from remote site to ITA's central, secure data center at City Hall East, improving system stability and resilience
- Migrating outdated software and video editing tools that have been in use by the station for 25+ years to modern industry standard tools, such as Adobe Premiere Pro for video editing and content creation
- Bolstered cybersecurity of all servers through system patching and verified compliance with ITA's citywide security policies

A key initiative in FY 2026–27 is the continued modernization of the station's infrastructure. These improvements will support faster and more adaptable content production across television, web, social media, and emerging digital platforms, while helping ensure residents continue to receive consistent, high-quality access to City meetings, public information, and programming.

B. Category #2 - Modernizing Staffing Contracts

Prior to this year, LA CityView 35 operated under a contracting model that required establishing individual contracts for more than 40 contractors directly. These agreements are set to expire in August 2026 and the City Attorney is forbidding this practice going forward. The ITA is required to develop a new contract with a singular vendor who will provide the necessary contracts. This gives the ITA an opportunity to leverage existing contractor talent under the new vendor and also scale as-needed contractor services for specific elected office or event needs.

This approach will also reduce the procurement, accounting, and administrative burden associated with managing 40 individual contractors, especially important as ITA has lost 22% of its administrative positions through the last two years of budget reductions. For the last 15 years, ITA has successfully used similar bench contracts to provide staffing elsewhere in the department. Consolidating staffing support under a single staffing contract will result in greater potential resources, temporary ramp-up capabilities for City events, and reduced administrative overhead.

Towards this end, on May 9, 2025, ITA released a Media Professionals Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking a qualified firm to provide on-demand staffing support for the station. Following a competitive evaluation of proposals, a contract was awarded on October 1, 2025. The station plans to begin utilizing this contract in FY 2026–27, following its anticipated execution in Summer 2026.

The new model improves flexibility and efficiency in the station's staffing practices. Under the previous approach, contractor roles had to be established and staffed in advance, which limited the station's ability to adapt to changing workload demands throughout the year. Under the new model, the station will be able to access a broad pool of contractors in various roles on demand, allowing staffing levels to scale based on actual production needs and for the benefit of our stakeholders. The ITA will also leverage this new contract for existing contractors to maintain their precious institutional knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, this new contracting approach reflects the widely used model across the media industry and will allow the station to better manage its resources and budget.

C. Category #3 - Expanding City Content Delivery Across Modern Platforms

Leading municipal television stations are much more than just TV stations. They distribute consumable content across multiple platforms, including cable, web, social media, YouTube, and streaming services, with cable serving as just one of several complementary distribution channels. However, LA CityView 35 has historically focused primarily on cable television, limiting its ability to reach audiences who, as the data shows, are rapidly consuming video on digital and streaming platforms.

Key Statistics on the Changes in the Media Industry:

- More People Now Watch TV on Streaming Platforms - As of December 2025, streaming reached a record 47.5% share of all television viewing, while cable fell to an all-time low of 20.2% (Nielsen News Center, *Streaming Shatters Multiple Records in December 2025 with 47.5% of TV Viewing*, January 2026)
- Cable TV Subscriptions Continue to Fall - Only 16% of adults under 30 maintain a cable or satellite subscription (Pew Research Center, *Streaming Dominance: Pew Data Shows Americans Leaving Cable Behind*, September 2025)

In response, the station is advancing a multi-platform distribution strategy to ensure City content is accessible and relevant.

This direction also aligns with feedback received from City elected offices and departments, which identified social media platforms and YouTube as the highest priorities for future expansion.

Over the past year, the station has made significant progress on this front, building its social media presence with hundreds of thousands of new engagements on Instagram, Facebook, X, and YouTube. Building on this momentum, the station plans to expand distribution to additional platforms in the coming years, including Roku, Apple TV, and Fire TV.

This strategy does not replace cable television, but expands access to City programming across the digital platforms residents increasingly use to access information.

D. Category #4 - Expanding LA CityView 35 Programming

LA CityView 35's core mission is to provide coverage of City Council meetings, government meetings, and press conferences, while also producing original programming that reflects our diverse communities and helps residents understand how local government impacts their daily lives. This mission will continue to guide all programming decisions.

A key area of modernization is the station's original programming, which has historically focused on traditional long-form formats designed primarily for television. As the station expands onto additional platforms, its programming will need to evolve to include a broader mix of short-form, long-form, and digital-friendly content tailored to each platform. This will allow more and expanded content of our elected offices and City departments than what was historically provided by LA CityView 35. In addition, this content will reach a wider audience, especially among younger Angelenos.

This model reflects proven programming approaches already implemented by award-winning municipal stations nationwide. Examples from peer cities include:

- Interviews: Conversations with City leaders (*"Meet Your District Supervisor"*, San Francisco - SFGovTV)
- Service Walkthroughs: Step-by-step guides for residents to City services (*"How Do I?: Properly Use Painted Curbs"*, Long Beach - LBTV)
- Short-Form Civic Explainers: Deep dives into specific departments or issues (e.g., *"Street Repair in Your Neighborhood"*, San Diego - CityTV)
- Community Spotlights: Stories highlighting neighborhoods, landmarks, or districts (e.g., *"CityStream: Seattle's New Waterfront Park"*, Seattle -

Seattle Channel)

- People of City Government: Human-centered stories explaining City operations (e.g., *“Day in My Life: NYPD Mounted Unit”*, New York - NYCTV)

These programming priorities were also reflected in the survey of City elected offices and departments, which identified service walkthroughs, event coverage, and short-form civic explainers as among the most valuable formats for public engagement.

The station has already seen measurable audience engagement with this approach. In April 2026, it produced a feature, *“Changing a Light Bulb 1000’ Above Los Angeles”*, profiling the City’s radio tower technicians, whose work supports the communications network relied upon daily by police, firefighters, and emergency personnel. *Within two weeks of release, the short-form video received over 500,000 views on YouTube*, demonstrating strong public interest in well-produced civic content and the station’s ability to engage residents through modern formats. While these changes have required training and changes to operations for key LA CityView 35 staff, this is undoubtedly essential for our audience and the changing media landscape.

As programming continues to evolve across platforms, the station is also working to ensure all content complies with newly updated ADA accessibility standards. In addition, ITA is evaluating emerging translation tools on these platforms that will help expand multilingual access to City programming for Los Angeles’ diverse communities.

CONCLUSION

Under the leadership of the Information Technology Agency, LA CityView 35 is undergoing a strategic modernization to ensure the station remains effective, relevant, and sustainable in a rapidly evolving media landscape. The initiatives outlined in this report are informed by industry research, LA CityView 35 staff meetings, peer city benchmarking, and growing national trends: streaming has surpassed cable, audiences are increasingly consuming content on digital and streaming platforms rather than traditional television, and leading municipal stations around the country have already adapted. Los Angeles is doing the same.

All operational changes will be implemented in phases to ensure continuity of service, with staff provided training and support throughout the transition. Importantly, all core services, including coverage of City Council and public meetings, will continue without interruption.

With the leadership and support of our City Council, the ITA is positioning LA CityView 35 to remain a modern, resilient, and accessible channel for residents across Los Angeles to connect with their local government.

RECOMMENDATION

The Information Technology Agency recommends that the City Council note and file this report.

IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of the recommendation in this report.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ted Ross
General Manager

ec: Robert Roth, City Administrative Officer
Austin Patrick, City Administrative Officer
Matias Farfan, Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst
ITA Executive Team
Roger Fernandez, ITA
Jayson Joseph, ITA