

New Cable Agreement on the Horizon

The city has been negotiating with our local cable company for several years in order to renew the company's operating agreement. City Council agendas this May and June will feature numerous discussion items related to the continuation of Comcast Cable services.

Some citizens wonder why the city of Davis is involved with the regulation of cable service and why we need an agreement with Comcast. Since cable regulation is a local responsibility, the city is trying to address the following areas in an agreement:

**Cable TV
IN FOCUS**

Stewardship of city resources: As most homeowners know, the city designates a utility easement that extends about 10 feet into every yard. Cable service is viewed as a utility. The city also has an obligation to make sure that the community is compensated whenever a company uses city streets, medians

and other rights of way for non-public purposes. An agreement requires that the cable company leave the easements and streets in good condition once they are used for underground cable and other equipment. Most cities receive five percent of gross cable revenues as compensation for the use of these easements.

Supporting access: Much like broadcast channels, cable companies are required by federal law to grant access to some of their channels to the public. In Davis, the community has three access channels: Davis Community Television (Channel 15), the Government Channel (Channel 16) and the Educational Channel (Channel 17). As part of the agreement, the city is likely to get some compensation to upgrade the equipment and studios for these channels. The city may also receive additional channels to include programming on the cable system from UC Davis and other distance learn-

ing centers.

Customer Service: The agreement is used to identify better cable customer service standards for local residents. In this way, the city can negotiate for better office hours, better response times and smoother resolution of customer problems.

System standards: In the current environment of technological change, an out-of-date cable system can mean limited opportunities for local residents and businesses. As part of the negotiation process, the city has already secured an upgrade to the cable system. Local residents can now take advantage of digital cable and cable modem service.

Better government communications: As part of an agreement, the city can negotiate for infrastructure and fiber to connect local government, community and school buildings. This infrastructure, called an "I-Net" or institutional network would enable our local schools to

communicate with each other and residents to communicate better with city hall. It would even allow for more public programming to originate from public buildings throughout the city. It is likely that the cable franchise agreement will include a citywide I-Net.

For more information about the cable franchise see www.cityofdavis.org/pcs/telecomm or call (530) 757-5691.



Visit www.cityofdavis.org/pcs/telecomm for information or to ask a question.

Council Works to Maintain Local Grant Program

Communities across the country, including Davis, receive money every year to help fund projects and programs important to those communities. This funding comes in the form of community development block grants, also known as "CDBG." This year, the city of Davis received almost one million dollars in CDBG funding.

**Grants
IN FOCUS**

The funding comes from the federal level, which is currently considering eliminating the program. In place of CDBG funds, a smaller program is being proposed focusing mainly on economic development. One of the concerns at the federal level is that some communities across the country spend their funds erratically.

In Davis, the program has been an unequivocal success. The city distributes CDBG widely throughout the community, leveraging eight dollars from other resources for every CDBG dollar spent, for a total impact worth \$8.8 million. Over 1,000 volunteers work in CDBG-funded programs in Davis, contributing the equivalent of \$250,000 per year in staffing to serve low-income residents. A diverse, outcome-oriented group of community organizations provide a safety net of services in Davis. This, in turn, has lessened dependency on entitlement programs, reduced chronic homelessness and supported the transition from public assistance to work for hundreds of Davis families.

The Davis CDBG funding has served as a foundation for the affordable housing program recog-

nized nationally as one of the most outstanding and creative programs in existence. The program has recently supported the Tremont Green and Moore Village projects.

The CDBG program also funds a broad spectrum of activities, including: formation of the transitional housing site for homeless individuals and families, expansion of the Davis Senior Center, repair of Manor Pool and renovation of the Veterans Memorial Theatre lobby.

Elimination of the program would have immediate and direct impacts on the city of Davis' fiscal stability and the capacity for the city to provide essential services to its residents. The City Council has adopted a resolution to oppose cuts in the program and has shared their concerns with Davis' congressional delegation.

For more information on CDBG, contact (530) 757-5691 or www.cityofdavis.org/pcs/cdbg.



Look for upcoming improvements to the busy Third Street corridor, thanks in part to CDBG grants.

Davis Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) in Action

The following are examples of the projects in Davis that support a system of action for low-income Davis residents. Taken as a whole, CDBG projects help to build an accessible, responsive and compassionate network for Davis residents of many backgrounds, incomes and special needs.

Health Care for Local Residents

Description: CDBG funds are used at CommuniCare Health Care which offers free and low cost medical care to Davis residents. CommuniCare is located in west Davis adjacent to Sutter Hospital. CDBG funds focus on pediatric health and dental care for low income children in Davis with no other source of coverage.

Total CDBG beneficiaries: 575
Current funding: \$20,186

Homeless Services

Description: The CDBG program supports local homeless services like Davis Community Meals. Davis Community Meals provides balanced meals served on-site twice a week to homeless and low-income Davis residents. The organization also provides overnight cold weather services for homeless Davis residents at the shelter located in central Davis on H Street. DCM also offers referral information about service programs for homeless and low-income Davis residents.

Total CDBG beneficiaries: 595
Current funding: \$18,480

Third Street Corridor and Other Access Projects

Description: CDBG funds are used to remove architectural barriers at various city facilities. CDBG funding is being used for accessibility improvements to Third Street between C and G Streets. Other access projects include curb ramps, parking lot improvements, audible crossing signals, assistive lis-

tening devices, visual/audible fire alarm devices, and accessible parking spaces at Central Park.

Total CDBG beneficiaries: 5,146
Current funding: \$310,530

Fair Employment and Housing for all Davis Residents

Description: Many Davis residents are familiar with the Community Mediation Service (CMS) which helps resolve landlord/tenant conflicts, disagreements between neighbors and helps facilitate hearings about larger community issues. CDBG funds are used to support the fair housing and employment responsibilities of CMS. This allows the program to monitor complaints and to intervene when housing and employment are withheld based on race, age, sexual orientation, and other factors.

Total CDBG beneficiaries: 1,139
Current funding: \$47,000