

**POLICIES FOR GOVERNMENT ACCESS PROGRAMMING  
CITY OF CALABASAS  
CTV, THE CALABASAS CHANNEL  
CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA**

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**Approved: April 10, 1997**  
**Communication and Technology Commission**  
**Revised: November 1999**  
**Revised: April 28, 2004**

**Approved: April 1997**  
**Calabasas City Council**  
**Revised: May 17, 2000**  
**Revised: May 26, 2004**

# CTV - THE CALABASAS CHANNEL, OPERATIONS POLICY

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# CTV - THE CALABASAS CHANNEL POLICY

## I MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of CTV, the Government Access Channel for the City of Calabasas, is to provide the citizens of Calabasas with information about their government and community.

## II BACKGROUND

- April, 1991 City Incorporation. City was served by four cable companies. Ventura County Cable served Saratoga and Malibu Canyon, later becoming TCI. Lost Hills Television covered the area south of the Ventura Freeway, now part of Falcon. The Mulwood area was also served by Falcon and Calabasas Park was served by CalaVision. City Council meetings were taped and hand delivered for later playback on each of the four cable systems.
- June, 1993 Chief Engineer Roy LaViolette arranged a set six hour time slot for Council playback with all of the cable companies. An electronic page generator promoting City events and agendas was used to fill extra time.
- May, 1995 The Calabasas Channel was developed when Mr. LaViolette set up a microwave system above Vista Point at the Las Virgenes Municipal Water Distract, high above the City. (See attached article.) With the feed, Calabasas was capable of sending out a signal city-wide 24 hours a day, feeding TCI on Channel 10 and Falcon and CalaVision on Channel 3. Calabasas City Council and Planning Commission meetings were televised live from City Hall for viewers at home. The City contracted with a company to televise meetings with a single camera
- October, 1996 Staff is hired to begin producing local programming.
- March, 1997 City Council and the Cable and Telecommunications Advisory Committee (CTAC) approve naming the government access channel, "CTV - The Calabasas Channel."
- May, 1997 The first City Council and Commission Meetings were televised live using a multi-camera robotic system.
- June, 1997 The City Council votes to create the Media Operations Department to expand the programming and services of CTV-The Calabasas Channel.

## III COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION (CTC)

The Communications and Technology Commission (CTC) consists of representatives appointed by the City Council. CTV staff will work with the Commission to develop programming for the Government Access Channel. CTC members will also serve as liaisons between the citizens of Calabasas and CTV staff to encourage use and viewing of the channel.

Issues concerning exceptions, variations, or modifications to this policy statement should be appealed to the CTC. Should there still be an unresolved issue, appeal may be brought to the City Council.

#### **IV REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF THE CALABASAS GOVERNMENT ACCESS CHANNEL (CTV)**

##### **A. Purpose**

The purpose of these regulations is to provide guidelines for the use of CTV, Government Access Channel, and to describe its use by the City of Calabasas. CTV is a government channel as provided for in the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984. This Federal legislation establishes government channels, educational channels and public channels for use by each of the corresponding broad groups. Because CTV is a government channel, there is no legal requirement to broadcast any type of programming that is not government-sponsored. CTV is committed to programming that helps residents learn more about City programs, their neighbors and about important issues facing the area in general.

##### **B. Objectives**

The objectives for use of CTV are as follows:

1. To serve as an on-going source of government information for the citizens of the CTV cable service area.
2. To increase public knowledge of the functions and responsibilities of city government, and of the functions of the various departments, Commissions, and Committees.
3. To serve as the official information center in the case of a local emergency situation; i.e., flood, fire, crime, etc.
4. To supplement the public safety awareness efforts of the local Law Enforcement and Fire Departments.
5. To enhance awareness of local history, culture, issues and activities.
6. To provide programs that facilitate and encourage an "aware and educated electorate."

##### **C. Channel Administration**

The Media Operations Director is responsible for programming activities and program schedules, which are established based on direction from the City Manager and in accordance with guidelines recommended by CTC and adopted by City Council. The costs associated with the City's involvement in CTV will be paid for with the franchise fees received from the cable franchises as provided for in the franchise and telecommunications agreements, and from the general funds of the City, according to City of Calabasas policies. CTV may solicit and accept

grants for operations or production of particular types of programming.

#### **D. Programming Statement**

CTV will provide information to the citizens of Calabasas concerning the functions, activities, programs and issues of the City. The channel is not intended to be used as a political forum by an individual or group, nor as a mechanism for building exclusive support for a particular person, program or issue. Use of the channel shall be governed by the operating procedures as set forth herein, and by the rules of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as they may apply to operations of CTV. Due to the diversity of opinions held by individuals, 100% agreement on programming content would be impossible. Therefore, opinions expressed on the channel may not necessarily reflect those of the City Council, the City Manager, CTC, or City staff.

The Media Operations Director reserves the right to review all programs, proposed and/or completed, to determine compliance with Programming Regulations and Channel Objectives. Any program under consideration may be accepted as presented, may be turned down completely, or may be given conditional approval. In the case of conditional approval, a program may be deemed appropriate and worthy, except for stated objectionable or offensive program portions, which will be listed as needing revision or deletion from the program. The presenter of the program will then have the option of making all specified changes or withdrawing the program from consideration altogether.

#### **E. Programming Restrictions**

1. The City of Calabasas recognizes the programming content restrictions imposed on CTV by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Regulations, by prevailing community standards, and by applicable Federal, state and local laws. In particular, CTV will not cable-cast, or allow to be cable-cast, any programming containing the following:
  - a. Information or advertising concerning an illegal lottery.
  - b. Paid advertising material in which commercial appeals for funds are made. Grants for programming purposes shall not be considered as advertising. Paid advertising material includes, but is not limited to, advertising by or on behalf of a candidate for public office or program material made available without charge by persons, corporations, or institutions which have a commercial interest in the subject matter. This provision shall not prevent the identification of persons or institutions providing grants or contributions to underwrite the cost of programs unrelated to the commercial interests of the donor or to programs which have a public interest overriding the private commercial interests.
  - c. Copyrighted material, unless clearances for use have been obtained, and written proof of such clearance can be presented.
  - d. Programming which is prohibited by applicable Federal, State or local laws.

2. In the case of programs deemed to be worthy or of social or artistic value, but also containing some program content or language that may be considered offensive to some viewers, the following message may be run prior to the program, and during any natural program break:

"The following program has been deemed worthy of cable-cast on CTV, but contains language or other program content that may be offensive to some viewers. Viewer discretion and parental guidance are advised."

#### **F. Political Broadcasts**

1. Declared candidates for any elective public office and persons advocating any cause, viewpoint or policy, proposed or otherwise, will not be eligible to appear on CTV, except in a program or series where the format allows for all candidates or sides of an issue to be heard on an equal basis and within the same format. Candidates for public office may appear on CTV on a bona fide news program; a news documentary, if the appearance of the candidate is incidental to presentation of the subject matter; or in coverage of official City meetings such as City Council, Commissions, or Committees. CTV and the Media Operations Director will make every effort to ensure that any appearance, except as authorized in Section 1., by any qualified political candidate on CTV will abide by these restrictions, and will tailor such appearances so as to minimize the fact of their candidacy.

Decisions on allowable program formats and appearances by qualified political candidates will be made by the City Manager. Should an appearance by a qualified political candidate be determined to fall outside of the categories of exempt programming mentioned above, then CTV will afford equal opportunities to all other candidates for that office.

2. A candidate requesting such equal opportunities on CTV shall have the burden of proving that he or she and the opponent are legally qualified candidates for the same office. A request for equal opportunity for use of CTV must be submitted to the Media Operations Director within one week of the day on which the first prior use giving rise to the right to equal time, occurred, provided that such candidate or spokesperson was not already offered an opportunity to appear on CTV on an equal basis with all other candidates or spokesperson for this office or issue.
3. When scheduling for equal opportunity programming, the Media Operations Director will do her/his best to provide the opponent(s) air-time on a similar day, at a similar time, and under similar conditions as the prior cable-cast, and within as efficient and effective time period as possible, but with no guarantee of being able to match cable-cast conditions exactly. All decisions on equal opportunity program schedules will be made by the Media Operations Director, under direction from the City Manager and City Council, and shall be final.
4. Programming by any other governmental group, individual or entity not an official branch of the City of Calabasas, may be allowed if the event or program to be taped is co-sponsored by the City of Calabasas, or special permission is obtained from the Media Operations

Director.

5. Coverage of a candidate forum shall be allowed if the forum adheres to the following guidelines:
  - a. An organization shall request coverage of a candidate forum in writing to the Media Operations Director no less than sixty days prior to the election. The request shall include an agreement that the organization will abide by the provisions in this policy. The organization should contact the Media Operations Director prior to requesting coverage to schedule a forum date that does not conflict with City meetings, other forums or scheduled events.
  - b. The forum shall not exceed two hours.
  - c. All candidates shall be invited.
  - d. The sponsoring group shall not endorse any candidate(s) prior to or during the recording of the forum. After the forum is recorded, the sponsoring group can endorse candidate(s). Such endorsement(s) will not disqualify the use of the forum on CTV through the day prior to the election.
  - e. An endorsement by any member of an organization's governing body shall disqualify that board member from participating in a forum.
  - f. Equal time slots shall be allowed for each candidate.
  - g. Organizations requesting coverage of a forum shall be responsible for providing the facility, a setting where all candidates can be seen equally, professional sound equipment so all candidates can be heard clearly and equally and reasonable room lighting. CTV will provide cameras, crew and fill lighting if necessary.
  - h. An organization requesting coverage must have a history of substantial activity in the City, not restricted to election seasons.
6. A maximum of four candidate forums shall be covered by CTV in an election period. In the event that there are more than four qualifying requests to cover candidate forums, the four requests to be selected shall be drawn by lot at a televised Communication and Technology Commission Meeting.

## **G. Program Type**

Programming viewed on CTV will fall into one or more of the following programming categories, listed by scheduling priority:

### **1. Emergency**

May consist of live, taped or Alpha Numeric programming, shown at any time, as emergency dictates. The purpose of this programming will be to inform residents of emergency situations, and to instruct viewers in evacuation, detour, notification and escape procedures. In the case of an emergency, regularly scheduled programming may be interrupted or canceled. The content and scheduling of any emergency programming must be approved by the Emergency Operations Manager or his or her designee.

## **2. Live Programs**

Live coverage of City Council and designated City Commission meetings currently takes place on a weekly basis, or more often as necessary. Meetings are carried gavel-to-gavel without editing or editorial comment.

## **3. Locally Produced Programs and Series**

Most programs and series will be produced by CTV staff and will be directly related to City issues or government-sponsored programs, or will be of a general information nature, such as health, cultural or lifestyle programming.

## **4. Outside Programming**

Pre-produced programming may be cable-cast on CTV. Such programming will be screened for suitability and compliance with channel objectives and Programming Regulations, is subject to approval by the Media Operations Director for scheduling on CTV.

## **5. CTV Billboard**

Alpha-numeric is a bulletin board style service used to display City-related messages to the public. This mode of programming may be used as filler, when no other video programming is scheduled on CTV. Message content and decisions on message suitability will be governed by channel objectives and programming regulations and is subject to approval by the Media Operations Director.

## **6. Satellite Reception**

Programming suitable for re-transmission may be obtained through satellite reception. Programs to be re-transmitted shall meet all requirements of these regulations for suitability that apply to locally produced programming. Satellite receptions may be videotaped for later broadcast or for use by city departments in training programs. In all cases, CTV shall observe all applicable rules concerning copyrights.

## **H. Access Policy**

### **1. CTV Billboard Procedures**

CTV is a Government Access Channel, as outlined in the Federal Cable Communications Act of 1984, created for the dissemination of government-related information to the viewing public. Access to the channel may range from submitting a public service announcement for the CTV billboard, to putting in a request for event coverage, to working side-by-side with CTV to produce a program or program series. In each case, proper procedures must be followed before access will be provided. CTV Billboard Procedures are as follows:

- a. The City Council, City Commissions, and all City departments, may submit public

service messages to be displayed in alpha-numeric form on CTV during non-programming hours. All messages must be submitted in writing, and must be submitted at least three working days prior to the requested start date. Forms for this service are available in the City of Calabasas, 26135 Mureau Road, Calabasas, CA 91302-3172, (818)878-4225, fax(818)878-0716. Fax, mail or bring messages with completed form to Calabasas City Hall. No announcements will be taken over the phone, except in the case of an emergency.

- b. Messages submitted by a City department must be approved by the Media Operations Director.
- c. Messages are input by the CTV staff on a "character generator" and appear on the TV screen a "page" at a time. Messages should be concise, and should contain basic information concerning what, when, where, how, and how much. Messages should be limited to eight brief lines. If necessary, the CTV staff will edit the message to improve readability, to make it fit on one page, or to insure message is grammatically correct.
- d. All submitted messages must be accompanied by the name of the submitting organization, the name and phone number of a contact person, and whether or not that information is to appear in the message. Submissions should include desired start and end dates.
- e. No classified ads and/or commercial messages will be allowed on CTV.
- f. Receipt of a public service message does not in any way guarantee its appearance on CTV. Suitability for this channel and compliance with City policies will be determined by the Media Operations Director. The date of input and the length of run of any message will be determined by staff availability and channel capacity.
- g. Every attempt will be made to input all messages received by CTV. In the case that channel capacity is at a peak, messages will be carried a maximum of three days each, and on a first-come, first-served basis, with the following priorities:
  - i. Emergency and public service notification messages, originated by Sheriff, Fire or Emergency Services;
  - ii. Announcements ordered by the City Council;
  - iii. Announcements ordered by the City Manager;
  - iv. Announcements submitted by City Department Heads, Commissions or Committees;
  - v. Announcements submitted by the general public.

## **2. Event Coverage Procedures**

- a. To request live or taped coverage of an event by CTV staff, the applicant must fill out and submit a Communications Services Media Work Orders. Forms may be obtained from the City of Calabasas, 26135 Mureau Road, Calabasas, CA 91302-3172. (818)878-4225 or online at [www.ci.calabasas.ca.us](http://www.ci.calabasas.ca.us) .
- b. Applicant will be required to provide the name, date, location and purpose of the event. The applicant must also provide details that the taping crew will need to know in advance about the location, activity, crowd, etc., and whether or not the event will further the channel objectives.
- c. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all on-site approvals and off-site permissions for taping. This includes permission from property or business owners, performers, event coordinators, etc. Approvals should all be obtained in writing prior to submitting the Media Work Order. Media Operations Director may ask for proof of approvals prior to considering the request, and will require applicant to sign a statement that all necessary clearances have been secured. The Media Work Order must be approved by the City Manager, including approval of the production costs to be incurred by CTV.
- d. It will be the applicant's responsibility to pay any extra costs incurred by the production, including, but not limited to, all admittance fees, artwork and graphics, union or other professional association fees, clearance fees, royalties and permission fees.
- e. The Media Work Order should be submitted a minimum of ten (10) working days prior to the scheduled event.
- f. A request originating from any City department must be approved by the Media Operations Director..
- g. The Media Operations Director will consider each request based on:
  - i. Compliance with City policies
  - ii. News or entertainment value
  - iii. Availability of staff
  - iv. Availability of equipment and facilities
  - v. Capabilities of staff and equipment
- h. Receipt of Media Work Order does not in any way guarantee approval of applicant's request.
- i. Completed programs and all work footage shall be the sole property of the City of Calabasas. Copies of completed programs may be purchased on VHS or SVHS videotape

at a purchase price to be set by resolution of the City Council.

- j. It is the policy of the Video Unit to retain completed programs for a minimum of six months, after which time the tapes may be reused or discarded. During that period, tapes may be retained, or erased, at the discretion of the Media Operations Director. Work footage will be erased immediately upon the completion of the program, and will not be available to anyone for any purpose at any time.
- k. Taping and/or post production of the event does not in any way guarantee that the event will be telecast on CTV.

### **3. Equipment Usage Procedures**

- a. Video equipment and facilities may be used in studio, or in the Council Chambers, by trained members of CTV staff with the approval of the Media Operations Director.
- b. While CTV may choose at various times to conduct video training sessions for the benefit of City staff members, there will be no obligation to conduct any other such sessions except by direction of the City Manager.
- c. CTV is not obligated to allow City equipment or facilities to be interfaced with any other equipment or facilities. Any user tampering with, adjusting or altering any City equipment or facilities may be subject to immediate forfeiture of their right to use said equipment or facilities.
- d. Completed programs will be screened for compliance with channel objectives and City policies, and for technical quality. Use of equipment and facilities to produce a program will not guarantee time on CTV for that program. The program may be accepted as presented, turned down completely, or given conditional approval. In the case of conditional approval, the program producer may make specified changes in order to bring the program into compliance, or may withdraw the program from consideration altogether.
- e. Video tape considered obscene, as defined by the FCC and the Supreme Court, shall not be brought into City Hall, any video control room, or be present at any time in the possession of a member of CTV staff or video volunteer on any shoot, either in the field or inside any municipal building.

### **4. Air-Time Request Procedures**

- a. Air-time on CTV may be requested for telecast of a non CTV pre-produced program or series, providing the program is suitable for airing on the channel.
- b. To submit a program for consideration, an Air-time Request Form describing program title, topic, format, and running time is required along with an SVHS videotape of the program.

- c. Program will be screened for CTV suitability, compliance with Channel Objectives and City Policies and for technical quality. The program may be accepted or rejected, in whole or in part, by the Media Operations Director based on any or all of the qualifying criteria.
- d. No programming containing commercial advertising will be allowed on CTV unless there is an overriding public interest.
- e. If approved for telecast, the Media Operations Director will determine when and how often the program will appear in the CTV schedule, but will schedule the program no more often than specified by the program presenter.
- f. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all copyrights and all clearances to all portions of the submitted program including, but not limited to, video, performance, music, song, theatrical and film rights. The Media Operations Director may require written proof of approvals and/or require the applicant to sign a statement that all approvals have been secured and to provide satisfactory indemnification of CTV and the City of Calabasas.
- g. Applicant must provide all programs on SVHS videotape, to be retained by CTV staff for the length of time that the program is to be run on CTV. If applicant wishes to have the tape(s) returned after it has completed its run on CTV, he/she must provide a mailing envelope or carton, with address label and sufficient postage, or should make arrangements to pick up the tape(s) within two weeks of the end of the scheduled run. Any tapes left longer than two weeks, unless otherwise arranged, may be discarded or erased for re-use.

## **5. Emergency Procedures**

Emergency programming is to be originated and authorized only by City Administration, Police, Fire, Public Works or emergency service personnel. Under no circumstances will access to CTV for emergency communications be granted to anyone who does not have the proper authority to initiate emergency procedures.

## **6. Live Coverage of City Functions**

- a. CTV, the Calabasas Channel, currently carries live coverage of the City of Calabasas Council meetings and designated Commission meetings. While such coverage is taking place, no other video production crew will be allowed in the meeting locale (except for production of film or videotape for news purposes by recognized broadcast agencies) without special permission from the City Council or Media Operations Director or the City Manager as appropriate.
- b. The highest quality of responsible meeting coverage can be achieved by a standardization of taping procedures.

- i. Presentation by the public, visuals, overheads, performances, etc., should be assigned to one location, which is to be equipped with proper lighting, microphones, camera angles, etc.
- ii. Coverage of the meeting should be objective, with camera shots limited to straight on head-and-shoulders shots of speakers, and cover shots of meeting participants. Directors should avoid subjective close-ups, unique angles, harsh or tinted lighting, and camera shots that portray anyone in a particularly negative or unfavorable manner.

## **7. Tape Storage/Sale Policy**

Videotapes from the Calabasas City Council and Commission meetings will be retained in perpetuity as requested by the City Council. These tapes are the official record of the meetings and the only detailed records. The City Council shall have notice prior to any destruction of the tapes. These tapes may be viewed by appointment at the office of Media Operations Department during normal business hours. Copies of these tapes may be purchased from the Media Operations Department for \$15 or may be borrowed for up to one week.