

**From:** Kiyoshi Ikeda <ken@bavc.org>  
**To:** Barry Fraser <Barry.Fraser@SFGOV.ORG>, Ron Vinson <Ron.Vinson@sfgov.org>

---

**Date:** Tuesday, December 01, 2009 03:28PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: communications about move

---

## NEWSLETTER FOR PRODUCERS

subject

### **Important: Information about facility closure and move**

body

### **Information for public access producers about end-of-year closure of 1720 Market Street and move to 2727 Mariposa**

As many of you know, the existing public access facilities at 1720 Market Street will close at the end of the year as BAVC transfers operations to its existing facilities at 2727 Mariposa Street. This announcement contains information about how SF Commons programs will be affected during the move. Particularly if you have an existing program scheduled to air between December 19 and January 4, please read this bulletin thoroughly for information about how to keep your program on the air continuously during the move. For those of you who haven't been to a public meeting or orientation meeting, nor learned about the process of the transition, please read our [FAQs about the transition](#) for history, background and other useful information.

**The last day for program drop off for playback at 1720 Market Street will be December 16, 2009 at 8pm. All field equipment must also be returned at this time. Producers are encouraged to drop off additional shows to run during the transition when drop off is not available, but no producer will be penalized for repeats during the transition period.**

Estimated dates/time period for initialization of service at 2727 Mariposa Street:

- Drop Off for Playback: Jan 4, 2010
- Field Equipment check out: Jan 15, 2010
- Dubbing/Editing Stations: estimated February 1, 2010
- Flash Studio: estimated February 15, 2010
- Trainings/certifications: estimated February 15, 2010
- Main Studio: no estimate available (funding currently not available)
- New Web site and ingest systems (with special workshops): July, 2010
- Additional access sites (ingest, field gear, Flash studios, training): Fall 2010

Please keep in mind that the only thing SF Commons/BAVC is required (and funded) to do between Sept 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010 is programming of the channels. Everything else is "extra" right now. (For more information about our contract deliverables and goals, please visit our [FAQs](#).) BAVC will work to get systems up and running as soon as possible, updating you and messaging information during the move as it becomes available. We will plan, at minimum, to send a new year's update on progress with the move and transition.

The newly-elected Community Advisory Board has been meeting with and without BAVC staff and hope to act as liaisons with the community during this transition. Members of the Community Advisory Board will be at the 1720 Market Street location to help explain the above details on Thursday, December 10 and Friday, December 11 from 3:00 to 6:00pm. They also plan to hold a feedback meeting as soon as is practicable in early 2010. They will also be calling producers to help them stay informed of the transfer of services.

We understand that there may be confusion and conflicting emotions as this facility is closed. It is our goal to help the community express its questions, concerns, and needs as much as possible. Please join the new online discussion group, which is being started by the Community Advisory Board: <http://groups.google.com/group/sfcommonscommunity>. The Google Group is a great place to voice your concerns, find volunteers for your projects, share files and information with fellow producers, and get more involved with public access. You can email the SF Commons Community Advisory Board at [cab@bavc.org](mailto:cab@bavc.org) or leave messages at the station (415-575-4949) until December 18.

As always, feel free to email us at [commons@bavc.org](mailto:commons@bavc.org) or call us at the station at 415-575-4949 with questions. We hope everyone has great holidays and enjoys time with friends and family as we work to execute renovations and move at the end of the year. We are excited about what the future and new year hold for public access in San Francisco, and we hope you will join us on the journey.

Thank you, and happy holidays to you and yours from all of the BAVC staff.

Sincerely,

Jen Gilomen

Director of Public Media Strategies

Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC)

Add: photos, PSAs

update page: [http://www.bavc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1798&Itemid=1749](http://www.bavc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1798&Itemid=1749)

## FAQs

### Why is BAVC closing the facility at 1720 Market Street?

The lease agreement that BAVC inherited from the previous public access operator expires on April 30, 2010. The existing facility is a commercial space of 4500 square feet at 1720 Market Street, and its rent alone (not including utilities and operating costs) is \$17,000 per month. Unfortunately, the lease also requires that the leaseholder return the building to its original state prior to occupancy before vacating the building – in other words, the facility must be returned to a large concrete slab with two bathrooms in the corner. To demolish the interior of the building is a \$200,000 process that is required by the landlord unless a suitable tenant can be found. Effectively, this requirement encumbers any leaseholder to complete the demolition to the estimated tune of \$200,000 or more. When the existing lease was secured over ten years ago, it was a much different environment, both for market rates, and for the “guaranteed” funding from franchise fees which in the past, adequately covered not only capital expenses (rent and physical assets such as equipment and hardware), but also sufficient funding to operate and provide access to that equipment and hardware. As part of BAVC's contract to operate the channels, the City of San Francisco has offered \$170,000 for an annual operations contract, with additional funding available via a one-time grant from Comcast to cover the existing lease requirements, including rent at 1720 Market Street through April 2010, and all demolition, moving, and transfer costs for the transition in the City's 2009 – 2010 fiscal year.

Operating costs are everything besides capital expenses, as interpreted by our City Attorney's office and our contract. They include *all* staff time (for programming the channels, managing facilities, programs, and equipment, managing volunteers, interns, community relations, and partnerships, conducting trainings for producers, providing facilities and equipment access and assistance, setting up for live programs, communications, administration, reception, etc.); all utilities such as power, water, heating and cooling, garbage, janitorial, phones, and Internet; supplies; insurance; legal fees; services; benefits; repair and maintenance costs, and much more. The separation of capital and operating, and the dramatic reduction in operating funds, proves to be the single most debilitating factor affecting public, educational, and government (PEG) channels not only in San Francisco, but nationwide. In California, a statewide franchise agreement the Digital Infrastructure & Video Competition Act (DIVCA) was passed in 2006, and similar laws have been passed in 23 states in recent years. In California alone, DIVCA caused the closure of over 50 PEG stations between

January 1 and March 10, 2009. In just eleven weeks, all of those communities, including the entire Los Angeles metropolitan area, lost their public access stations and channels.

The story was similar in San Francisco, but the channels have survived under a new City Contract. In previous years, the operational funding for public access in San Francisco totaled upwards of \$900,000 on top of franchise fees available for any required capital expenses, including capital improvements and rent. The previous operator was able to not only operate the facility at 1720 Market Street (paying for all of those operating costs listed above), but was also able to staff the facility with up to eleven full-time employees. When the City issued a new RFP in 2009, the guaranteed operations funding had decreased from \$900,000 per year to \$170,000, the annual amount the City of San Francisco has set aside for public access operations. The over 80% reduction in operation funding is insufficient for managing a full traditional television station with studios, and requires an innovative model like the one BAVC proposed the cable access in San Francisco are to survive as a community resource.

**What are the services BAVC is required to provide under its city contract? Is BAVC able to meet its deliverables?**

BAVC's contract with the City of San Francisco is for a period of three years. In it, BAVC is required to provide a baseline service level during its first year of operations, and an "enhanced" level of services beginning in the second year (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). Below is a breakdown of the required services and a comparison showing what BAVC has provided in excess of those requirements.

BAVC's contract service deliverables, September 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010	Actual services provided, September 1, 2009 – November 30, 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule and playback of no less than 100 hours of locally produced original programming each month.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediately increased facility hours for program drop-off from 20 hours/week under previous operator to 38 hours/week, including four evenings until 8:00pm</li> <li>• Continuously (and uninterruptedly) programmed both channels with 24</li> </ul>

	<p>hours of content daily with an excess of ___ hours of original local content per month</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waived program membership fees for all active and new producers through March 1, 2010 to encourage retention and allow time for transition</li> <li>• Held community meetings about the transition, and held monthly orientations and programming meetings</li> <li>• Supported live programs in the Flash Studio four evenings a week until 8:00pm, and added additional live call-in programs</li> <li>• Offered free use of edit suites for public access programs</li> <li>• Offered dub stations and ingest stations</li> <li>• Packaged field kits for checkout, and offered free use of field equipment for public access programs</li> <li>• Began a series of trainings and certifications at a very low cost (between \$20 and \$60 each)</li> <li>• Offered facility reservations, including conference room and use of main studio as a production room and as a rented space for community events</li> <li>• Conducted community outreach, and held elections for a Community Advisory Board</li> </ul>
--	---

As you can see, BAVC has far exceeded its contract deliverables in service of the community, as we will aim to do in the remaining years of our contract. While the recession takes hold and our funding remains restricted, we are committed to innovating and leading a positive change for the producers, audiences, and communities of San Francisco. Most importantly, we are committed to keeping the public access channels alive as a community resource for the duration of our term as operators.

**Is there anything we can do to change this?**

First and foremost, you can encourage your legislators to support H.R. 3745, the "Community Access Preservation" Act (CAPA), a bill introduced by Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (Wisconsin) that could fix several key issues affecting public access, including the restrictions on operational versus capital funding. A full description and a simple primer about the bill is available from the Alliance for Community Media (ACM). The ACM is offering a very simple online tool that allows you to fax and send letters directly to Representative Pelosi and Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein. It's easy: <http://www.alliancecm.org/CAPtoolkit>. The letters are most effective when they include a personal note about why public access matters to you. You can voice your concerns to BAVC, to the City of San Francisco, and to your elected officials. And as always, you can participate in public access to exercise your freedom of speech and engage with our local community about issues you care about.