Cable code amendments

Department of Information Technology

March 18, 2015
What is the cable code?

- Sets forth the general rules for all cable franchises granted in the City of Seattle.
- Outlines procedures for the granting renewal, transfer and termination of franchises.
- Contains consumer protection standards relating to services that apply to all cable operators.
Proposed changes to the code  (Covered 2/4/15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<td>Correct inaccuracies</td>
<td>- In some sections the code refers to Departments that no longer exist.</td>
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| Modernize                                    | - The Code contains antiquated provisions like requiring cable operators to provide signals in color.  
  - Include new methods for informing the public |
| Ensure consistency with applicable law       | - Some areas such as rate regulation have mostly been preempted by Federal law. |
| Ensure consistency with current City practices | - Franchises are awarded for 10 years  
  - Updated risk management and insurance requirements |
| Streamline procedures                        | - Granting and renewing franchises                                       |
| Reorganize                                   | - Placed sections such as application, granting, renewal, transfer and termination of franchises together and in logical order. |
Substantive changes to the code

- Eliminating Cable Franchise Districts
- Allowing more flexible build out terms while ensuring equity
- Enhancing call answering standards and reporting
- Codifying restrictions on long-term exclusive contracts in condominium and apartments buildings
- Reserving the City’s rights in a fluid regulatory environment
Substantive Changes:
Eliminate Cable Franchise Districts
Ensuring equity

- Ensuring economic equity
  - New ‘significant’ build requirement
    - *New franchises:* At all times after the date that is two years after the effective date of any new franchise, a significant portion of the total households to which grantee offers cable service shall be households that fall below the median income level as measured by census block group data.
    - *Renewed franchises:* At all times, a significant portion of the total households to which grantee offers cable service shall be households that fall below the median income level as measured by census block group data.
  - Twice annual meetings with new providers
  - Annual report to Council on status of provider equity obligations
  - New language allows City to impose penalties and additional build out obligations to ensure equity
Enhancing call answering standards and reporting

- Limiting customer call wait times on IVR to 3 minutes
- Requiring all transfers to a customer service representative within 30 seconds
- Enhanced reporting standards on call wait and transfer times
- New language allows City to impose larger credits to customers
Codifying restrictions on long-term exclusive contracts

Based on Councilmember feedback, we’re taking the following actions for outreach to condo and apartment residents:

- Informational mailing to multi-dwelling unit (MDU) residents about their rights under the new code
- Planned informational presentation in April for MDU owners and managers
Questions?