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The changes come as Los Angeles faces mounting competition from cities, states and foreign countries aggressively luring movie and television productions with generous tax incentives.

Although production is at record levels because of a surge in television shoots, feature film activity remains below its peak reached nearly a decade ago, giving new urgency to the organization.

"We want to let the world know we are a renewed organization," group President Steve MacDonald said. "There has been a tremendous amount of work done by our staff, the board and others to improve our finances, operations and corporate governance so that Film L.A. can more effectively keep production here, where it belongs."

The name change also helps the nonprofit group further distance itself from what was a paralyzing scandal involving its former chief, Cody Cluff, who was sentenced last year to three years' probation for embezzling funds. Cluff pleaded no contest to using the organization's money for personal use, including trips to strip clubs and donations to his children's school. He was ordered to repay \$80,000 to the group.

Film L.A. says it will work with government officials to develop a marketing plan that may feature movie trailer advertisements and public service announcements touting the economic benefits of an industry that employs about 250,000 in Los Angeles County.

It also is working with Villaraigosa on a proposal to waive filming fees at city-owned facilities. The City Council is expected to vote on the measure, announced in October, early next year.

Additionally, film and city officials are discussing offering such incentives as reduced utility charges to filmmakers who shoot in economically depressed areas.

"We will do everything we can to support and promote film production and make it easier to film in L.A.," Villaraigosa said.

As part of that effort, Villaraigosa said, he will push hard for a state bill that would provide tax credits for filming in California.

The simpler name coincides with the group's move later this month to the Los Angeles

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Center Studios downtown from its current headquarters in Hollywood.

Other changes include investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to develop a software program that will allow filmmakers to better track permits.

The Entertainment Industry Development Corp. was created in 1995 to streamline the film permit process and promote local production. The Cluff scandal prompted a yearlong investigation, grand jury hearings and numerous changes to improve oversight and management. Those included establishing financial controls, independent audits and a new board run by industry, labor and neighborhood representatives instead of politicians.

"We've created a strong governing board to restore integrity to the organization," said board member Lisa Rawlins, senior vice president of production at Warner Bros.

Since being hired in April 2004, MacDonald has cut expenses and added more staff to better notify residents of upcoming filming and reduce neighborhood complaints. The organization, funded through industry fees, has a staff of 45 and an annual budget of about \$4 million.

It ended fiscal 2005 in the black after several years of losses.

"We are a different organization," MacDonald said.



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