



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

December 23, 2013

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chair  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka *is Kibhawi for*  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
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First District  
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District  
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District  
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Fourth District  
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

## COUNTY INVOLVEMENT IN LA n SYNC INITIATIVE (Item Number 4, Agenda of November 5, 2013)

On motion of Supervisors Knabe and Ridley-Thomas, the Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to report back on the following as they relate to the LA n Sync Initiative: 1) Consideration of County participation in LA n Sync meetings and the identification of funding opportunities; 2) Assessment of the need and feasibility for the creation of a centralized position to liaison with the philanthropic community; 3) Identification of departmental funding priorities that LA n Sync could support; and 4) Identification of strategic partnership opportunities that the County and LA n Sync can mutually support. The Board further instructed the CEO to work with each Board office to obtain feedback prior to presenting a report.

### Background

LA n Sync is an initiative led by the Annenberg Foundation. It was created to strengthen the Los Angeles region as an ideal destination for funding opportunities. LA n Sync attempts to challenge the misperception that the Los Angeles region, because of its size, geography and diffused political systems, is not a good region for large federal or foundation grants. LA n Sync works with public and private agencies to identify funding priorities and opportunities, and to position applicants to be as competitive as possible.

Staff from the Annenberg Foundation provide administrative support for LA n Sync. Two committees – LA n Sync Workgroup and Bell Commission – have been formed to oversee the identification of funding opportunities and the development of regional goals and strategies. Staff assigned to the LA n Sync Workgroup identify and

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review funding opportunities and then notify agencies throughout the County region who may wish to apply. The Bell Commission provides the volunteer leadership role to guide the collaborative funding opportunity efforts. The membership structure and role of these two committees are still being defined.

Given the large number of federal and foundation grants available, LA n Sync developed a set of criteria for supporting a funding opportunity. The criteria are:

- Grant amount must be at least \$1M for implementation (\$250,000 for arts-related grants) and \$500,000 for planning
- Require cross-sector collaboration
- Align with federal or state funding priorities and opportunities
- Potential for leveraging resources
- Potential for systems change

LA n Sync has also developed a set of resources that are made available to organizations applying for grants. These resources include:

- Access to Grant Funding Forecast
- Assistance with matching fund requirement
- Grant writing assistance
  - Peer reviews/Editing
  - Grant writers
- Letters of Support
- Federal, state and local advocacy

### County Participation

Currently, CEO staff informally participate on the LA n Sync Workgroup and Bell Commission. Where appropriate, CEO staff have alerted departments to potential funding opportunities identified by LA n Sync.

Additionally, LA n Sync has convened discussion groups around a host of topics including grant coordination, intergovernmental relations and the Affordable Care Act. County departmental staff have attended these forums to share their department's priorities and discuss how the priorities might align with other departments as well as non-County agencies.

### Philanthropic Partnership Office

Several governmental units have attempted to strengthen their relationship with philanthropy and federal funders through the creation of a philanthropic partnership office. Examples of these offices were found in Denver, and the Cities of Newark, New York and Los Angeles. Each office was comprised of several full time staff members

who served as a bridge between the interest of the jurisdiction and those of the local philanthropic community. These offices also convened cross-sector partners when such collaborations were necessary for grant proposals. Specifically, the offices served to connect governmental goals with those of the local philanthropic community and build/strengthen the relationship between governmental departments and philanthropy. Funding for these offices was normally a mix of government, foundation and private funds.

LA n Sync has partnered with the City of Los Angeles (City) to support the creation of their Office of Strategic Partnership. Housed in the Office of the Mayor, the Office of Strategic Partnerships convened meetings with City departments when cross-departmental collaboration was a necessary grant component, and served as an entry point for philanthropy to engage with the City. In some instances, the office served as the project lead when federal or philanthropic funds were being pursued. The Office of Strategic Partnerships has an annual operating budget of \$300,000 and includes four positions, including a deputy mayor position. Fifty percent of the operating budget is provided by foundations.

In the County, individual departments take a more proactive role in identifying and developing grant opportunities that are unique to each department. Where appropriate, the CEO has coordinated various efforts that have required cross-cluster or departmental collaboration.

There are fiscal and operational impacts to creating a centralized position and/or office to liaison with the philanthropic sector. The following options are provided for your consideration:

- a) Direct the CEO to maintain the existing relationship with LA n Sync in its current capacity, which includes informal participation in LA n Sync meetings, and intermittent coordination of collaborative grant opportunity efforts.
- b) Direct the CEO to explore the creation of one position to function as a full-time grant liaison with the philanthropic community.
- c) Direct to CEO to conduct an in-depth analysis of creating a centralized unit to coordinate departmental grant-opportunity efforts. The analysis would include determination of the proper staffing level, appropriate size of a proposed unit, and the potential funding source(s).

#### Alignment of Departmental Funding Priorities with LA n Sync

To assist with grant prioritization, LA n Sync has grouped funding opportunities into several categories:

- Arts and Culture
- Education
- Early Childhood
- Urban Revitalization
- Housing
- Public Safety
- Economic Development
- Health
- Transportation and Development
- Environment
- Human Services

LA n Sync staff queries federal and philanthropic sources to identify funding opportunities within these categories. Funding forecast documents were created for each category, listing available funding opportunities as well as eligibility requirements.

Many of these LA n Sync categories already align with the existing County departmental cluster structure. As such, it would be possible to identify funding opportunities that are of potential interest to County departments and determine which LA n Sync resource(s) might be available to support the grant application effort.

#### Partnership Opportunities with LA n Sync

As previously noted, CEO staff attend both the LA n Sync Workgroup and the Bell Commission meetings. Participation in these meetings and accessibility to the LA n Sync Funding Forecast has and will continue to strengthen communication about funding opportunities for County departments as well as reinforce the County's commitment to collaborate with our regional partners.

#### Recommendations

LA n Sync is in its pilot phase. In March 2014, LA N Sync will review its year-long activities and determine how best to move forward. CEO staff will continue to participate in LA n Sync meetings and ensure that linkages are made between County departments and all possible funding opportunities. Unless instructed to proceed with one of the options identified, the CEO will report back to the Board after March 2014 with recommendations regarding the County's continued participation.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or your staff may contact Brencé Culp at (213) 974-1104, or via email at [bculp@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:bculp@ceo.lacounty.gov).

WTF:BC  
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c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors