

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

August 7, 2018

Developing a Land Use Tool to Cultivate the Bioscience Industry

The Battelle Memorial Institute study commissioned by the County of Los Angeles (County) in 2014 found that the bioscience industry has been, and continues to be, an important economic driver for the Los Angeles region. Follow-up reports by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and the Los Angeles County Community Development Commission (CDC) support this finding and urge County officials and industry leaders to take proactive steps to develop the region’s bioscience industry. To date, the County Board of Supervisors (Board) has engaged in a number of significant actions to support this aim.

Acting on the need for more available entrepreneurial and research space, the Board provided funding for the construction of an approximately 18,000 square foot bioscience incubator on the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute’s (LA BioMed) campus at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center campus, and a 20,000 square foot bioscience incubator on the California State University Los Angeles campus, both of which will be in operation in early 2019. In December, 2016 and April 2017, respectively, the Board certified the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Campus Master Plan Project Final Environmental Impact Report that included approximately 15 acres of County-owned land for the development of a 250,000 square foot bioscience tech park, and entered into an exclusive negotiating agreement with LA BioMed to oversee the approach, structure, and process for the development of the proposed bioscience tech park.

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Other County efforts include the development of a Countywide bioscience investment fund, and inclusion of the bioscience industry sector as a targeted workforce to develop and support with County resources, led by the newly established Countywide Economic Development program. Resources from the County Chief Executive Office, Department of Health Services, and Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services will all be brought to bear to support elements of those efforts.

While the foregoing reports and corresponding County efforts have focused on economic incentives, another tool the County should consider is its land use regulatory authority. The land use entitlement and permitting processes can be lengthy and costly and the County should consider streamlining these processes in the unincorporated areas to further incentivize this industry to locate within the region. This could open wide-reaching opportunities in the County as the unincorporated areas where the Board has direct land use authority encompass more than 2,600 square miles. These 130 socially and economically diverse communities represent two-thirds of the County's land area and are dispersed amongst all five supervisorial districts.

Moreover, the Board must be aware of the availability of areas in the unincorporated County that are currently appropriately zoned for these businesses. And, in areas where the proposed uses are not allowed by right, the Board should consider the development of an industry-specific tool to streamline the land use and building permitting processes.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Instruct the Director of the Los Angeles County (County) Department of Regional Planning, in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Public Works, Chief Executive Officer, Chief of the County Fire Department, Director of the Department of Health Services, County Counsel, and bioscience industry representatives, to report

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back on the feasibility of developing a Countywide zoning overlay or other land use and/or permitting tools or updates with accompanying amendments to the County Code that would streamline the entitlement and permitting processes in the unincorporated County specifically for the bioscience industry. The report should be submitted to the Board of Supervisors in writing in 120 days and should include:

1. Identification of existing zoning in the unincorporated County that currently allows (either by-right or with a conditional use permit) wet and dry laboratories and related incidental uses, as well as bioscience, biomedical and biotech manufacturing uses;
2. Evaluation and recommendations of best practices and mechanisms to create a Countywide zoning overlay or other land use tool that would streamline the land use entitlement process specifically for bioscience/biomedicine/biotech companies to locate within the County's unincorporated communities; consideration should also be given to (a) reduced parking or other modifications to other applicable land use requirements for operations located in close proximity to transit; and (b) geographic location and synergies to other high growth industry centers in the unincorporated County; and
3. Evaluation of County building permit requirements that currently create barriers for this industry to locate within the unincorporated County and mechanisms to streamline the building permit process specifically for proposed bioscience/biomedicine/biotech companies.

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