

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

March 19, 2019

EAST LOS ANGELES ENTREPRENEUR CENTER

East Los Angeles (ELA) is the densest unincorporated community within Los Angeles County with a large immigrant community that drives the local business sector. ELA has diverse and notable commercial and retail corridors with growing consumer markets and infrastructure investment opportunities. These elements can prove ripe for the implementation of a deliberate and sustainable economic development strategy that aims to build community wealth and strengthen collaboration between ELA businesses and Los Angeles County governmental systems.

The Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) is dedicated to creating a fair and vibrant marketplace where micro and small businesses are healthy and prosperous and aspiring entrepreneurs have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. Recognizing that small businesses are the building blocks of economic development, DCBA strives to ensure communities build local capacity for commerce and create communities of opportunity through their programs and services. DCBA's Small Business Concierge program assists entrepreneurs and

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prospective business owners open small businesses in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County by serving as a single point of contact in order to help navigate government systems and through counseling during the complex process of opening a business.

The establishment of the ELA Entrepreneur Center (ELA-EC) is a proactive approach to provide a comprehensive offering of resources and services to entrepreneurs and businesses. ELA-EC will be designed to carry out the intent of programs like the Small Business Concierge, but through a place-based approach. It will complement various efforts to build community wealth and address commercial and residential displacement. This project aims to support new and existing local businesses as they move through the different business cycles with business development programs and tools. These efforts will include capacity-building programs and pre-venture resources such as business development, access to capital, including microloans, credit repair, technical assistance, and navigating the County system. Programming at ELA-EC will be delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and will empower entrepreneurs and micro and small business owners while helping cultivate community prosperity and economic sustainability.

To develop successful programming at the ELA-EC, DCBA will leverage existing partnerships with business-facing County departments but will need to create or expand partnerships with key strategic community-centered and mission-driven business organizations with proven and innovative service models. Some of these partnering organizations include the Small Business Administration's Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN), SCORE, Bet Tzedek

Legal Services' Small Business Development Project, and others. Partner County departments such as the Community Development Commission (CDC), Regional Planning (DRP), Public Health (DPH), Public Works Building and Safety (DPW), and Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS) provide vital services to our business community and will prove to be key partners in this endeavor. WDACS has committed to host the ELA-EC at Centro Maravilla Community Center and CDC will support and coordinate key services from this space. The establishment of the ELA-EC serves as an opportunity to pilot a customized local business development model that can be expanded and brought to scale throughout other parts of Los Angeles County.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Instruct the Director of the DCBA, or his designee, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), WDACS, the CDC, and other relevant departments to begin immediate development of the ELA-EC and its programming. The programming shall be developed with community-focused financial entities and mission-driven institutions with expertise in business development in economically disadvantaged communities; and identify opportunities for integration with existing County-led initiatives, policies, and programs geared towards economic and workforce development. Programming should include but not limited to: capacity-building, pre-venture resources, business development assistance, access to capital, credit repair, mentoring, technical assistance, and systems navigation; and

- 2) Instruct the Directors of the DPH, DPW, and DRP, in collaboration with DCBA, to establish a permitting panel and other relevant services designed to meet the needs of the business community at the ELA-EC; and
- 3) Authorize the Director of DCBA to develop and enter into the appropriate agreements and/or Memorandum of Understandings with relevant departments, and external partners to establish and support the ELA-EC provided funds are budgeted, including but not limited to the appropriated adjustment from the Centro Maravilla Service Center Entrepreneur Center Refurbishment Project approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 5, 2019; and
- 4) Authorize the Director of the DCBA, or his designee, to enter into an agreement with a consultant(s) as needed.

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