

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS  
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April 20, 2021

**Establishing the Los Angeles County Economic and Workforce Development Department**

The Board of Supervisors has long supported the reimagining of economic development and workforce services for Los Angeles County residents. On May 8, 2018, the Board approved a motion directing the CEO to analyze the progress on achieving workforce development alignment across the County. On February 5, 2019, the Board approved a motion directing the CEO to engage a consultant to study the current structure of the County departments and offices that administer economic and workforce development services and programs, coordinate the efforts in response to the May 8, 2018 motion on workforce alignment, and provide comprehensive analysis and recommendations for the most effective structure to optimize services, including the possible creation of a new department dedicated to the workforce and economic development.

The onset of COVID-19 has laid bare the need for a department to coordinate an equitable economic recovery and further economic development in the Los Angeles

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County region. In furtherance of streamlined service delivery to our County businesses and workers, the CEO submitted a report (Optimization Report) in July 2020 that explored ways to optimize economic and workforce development services. In July 2020, the CEO submitted a report (Optimization Report) that explored ways to optimize economic and workforce development service delivery and recommended several alternative paths, including an option for a standalone economic and workforce development department. The Optimization Report recommended integrating the economic development functions of several separate departments and agencies with existing workforce development functions to create a new Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD). Specifically, the Report recommended combining the workforce development services in WDACS with the CEO-EDD, the Office of Small Business from DCBA, and the Economic Development Unit of LACDA.

Following submission of the Optimization Report, the Board approved motions on August 4 and September 1, 2020, to move forward with an implementation plan to establish a new EWDD and an Aging Department (AD).

On March 8, 2021, the Chief Executive Office (CEO), in consultation with the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), County Counsel, the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), and the Departments of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), Mental Health, Health Services, Public Social Services, and Human Resources, submitted the Board memo titled, "Report on Establishment of the Aging Department and the Economic and Workforce Development Department" (Report), which proposed a phased implementation plan to establish the two new County departments: the EWDD and the

AD.

The first phase, which could begin as early as October 1, 2021, would establish the WDACS organizational structure's internal infrastructure that would ultimately lead to the new, standalone EWDD and AD. Specifically, phase one would entail creating a shared administrative organization with two branches within WDACS, including a branch that integrates economic development services from the CEO-Economic Development and Affordable Housing Division (EDAH), DCBA, and LACDA, with workforce development services currently in WDACS. The second branch would integrate aging, adult, and community services functions currently within WDACS. An executive director will provide programmatic and policy leadership over each branch, while the organization as a whole will be managed temporarily by a Supervising Administrator (SA) with responsibility for resourcing each branch's centrally provided administrative services and ultimately facilitating the creation of the two new departments in the second phase. Furthermore, the branding and naming of the new Department should be carefully selected to not cause any confusion to the Public in accessing resources from already established City and State Economic Workforce Development Departments.

Due to the current economic impacts stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become imperative for the County to move swiftly to create the economic and workforce infrastructure necessary to "meet the moment" and position the County to recover stronger and more equitably than before the pandemic.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

Adopt the recommendations in the CEO's March 8, 2021, Report and direct the CEO to work with County Counsel, the Department of Human Resources, the Auditor-Controller, WDACS, LACDA, DCBA, and any other relevant departments to take all necessary and appropriate actions to:

- 1) Immediately begin the process to phase in the creation of the new EWDD, with phase one to begin on or before October 1, 2021;
- 2) Appoint a Supervisory Administrator by July 1, 2021, or sooner;
- 3) Provide recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on the appointment of an Executive Director for the Economic and Workforce Development branch of the proposed phase 1, by July 1, 2021, or sooner, to immediately begin work, in close collaboration with Supervisory Administrator, on developing the vision, purpose, and goals of the new Department under phase one and the future EWDD, including but not limited to:
  - a) Develop a list of programmatic and logistical needs.
  - b) Organization and programmatic structure.
  - c) Appropriate functions for a new EWDD.
  - d) Appropriate administrative and programmatic staffing needs for phase 2.
  - e) Short- and long-term success goals and their performance metrics.
  - f) Branding and suggestions on the naming of the new Department.
  - g) Provide a report back to the Board of Supervisors under Directives 2 (a through f) by October 1, 2021, or sooner.
- 4) Report back to the Board of Supervisors on or before October 1, 2021, with recommendations on the appropriate placement of the Native American Indian

- Commission, the Human Relations Commission, and Dispute Resolution Program;
- 5) Work with LACDA, DCBA, and WDACS to ensure vital economic and workforce development services, as well as services to older adults, workers, businesses, and other customers continue without disruption; and
  - 6) Direct CEO-Employee Relations to consult, where appropriate, with Labor on the impact of the proposed changes.

**WE FURTHER MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Direct County Counsel to prepare necessary ordinance amendments to establish phase one before October 1, 2021;
- 2) Direct the Directors of DCBA and WDACS, and the Executive Director of LACDA, to promptly make available or provide access to all information (including but not limited to data, reports, employee information, strategic documents, and correspondence) requested by the Supervisory Administrator and the new Executive Director of the EWDD, to effectuate the directives of this motion and the recommendations of the Report; and
- 3) Direct the Supervisory Administrator to report to the Board in writing within 60 days of appointment with a detailed implementation strategy and quarterly thereafter to update the Board on implementation progress.

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