

June 8, 2021

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

AND HOLLY J. MITCHELL

Moving Forward with the Restorative Justice Village Master Plan in Pursuit of Care First in Los Angeles County

Earlier this year, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) approved moving forward with the Restorative Justice Village Master Planning process to help weave together the needs of Chinatown residents and businesses as well as the needs of the chronically homeless, the formerly incarcerated, and other marginalized populations. This effort will build upon the County’s “care first” efforts currently planned and underway and support the closure of Men’s Central Jail (MCJ), like the Hilda L. Solis Care First Village that provides 232 interim housing for people who are unhoused and justice impacted. Similar initiatives are also underway with non-County organizations, such as Homeboy Industries, the California Endowment, and the City of Los Angeles, to help address homelessness and mass incarceration.

To move the County forward in our planning efforts for the surrounding area and to support the MCJ closure, Public Works and their consultant, NAC Architecture, Inc., are ready to move forward with a scoping document that will serve as the basis for the preparation of the Restorative Justice Village Master Plan. Based on the May 21, 2021

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Board report from the Chief Executive Office, the preparation of this scoping document is anticipated to cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000. It will establish a proposed framework for an effective master planning effort that considers the development of types of housing, services, and programs envisioned for the Restorative Justice Village Master Plan. Additionally, it will include a process for community engagement and outreach, especially to property owners adjacent to MCJ and the Hilda L. Solis Care First Village.

The need for the Restorative Justice Village, and the acute and sub-acute mental health beds accompanying this project, has never been greater. According to a 2019 report, the County has fewer than half the number of mental health beds it needs for its residents. These needs have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which provided stressors on the physical and financial well-being of millions of residents across the County, accompanied by a corresponding increase in mental health issues and increased substance use across the country. And although health concerns brought upon by the pandemic prevented the County from conducting the homeless count, it is widely anticipated that the financial fallout from the pandemic increased the number of individuals experiencing homelessness within the County. To address the significant mental health needs of County residents, the County must prioritize the establishment of new beds while revitalizing or replacing facilities that are outdated and no longer providing adequate mental health care, in a manner that results in an overall increase in beds in the County's continuum of care available to residents.

Lastly, there is a great need to have a community center in the area similar to the Second District's Developing Opportunities and Developing Reentry Solutions (DOORS)

Community Reentry Center (CRC) that provides a robust set of support services to more than 2,000 justice-involved individuals who face obstacles, challenges, and barriers to self-sufficiency when they re-enter their communities.

Some of the services that D.O.O.R.S. offers are: “housing (crisis and permanent), benefits establishment, employment support, education (GED/High School Diploma Program), substance abuse counseling and treatment linkage, mental wellness counseling, legal aid support, visitation monitoring, intensive care management, healing through the arts, community events, computer lab.”¹

The community resource center is effective because it provides a centralized space to access services from County departments and community-based organizations. It is a “one-stop-shop” where vulnerable populations can access the supportive services they need on their road to recovery.

Individuals released from the jails are considered high-risk of facing homelessness—over 30%² and are likely to have a history of homelessness before being incarcerated. In the County’s Whole Person Care (WPC) In-Reach Jail program, 41.9%³ of the participants are at risk of experiencing homelessness and report having a serious mental health need—68.1%⁴ reporting a chronic mental health condition. Among the almost 15,000 people who are incarcerated, almost 30%⁵ reported

¹ <https://dhs.lacounty.gov/office-of-diversion-and-reentry/our-services/office-of-diversion-and-reentry/reentry-division/community-reentry-center-doors/>

² http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1104568_DEVELO_1.PDF

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

substance dependency. Only a very small percentage, less than 10%⁶, report no mental health, medical, or substance abuse dependency.

Additional community services are needed to divert individuals from incarceration into mental health, substance use, housing, and trauma-centered services; and having a community resource center, a “one-stop-shop” would provide a centralized location for those who are being released from IRC, individuals who are being diverted from arrest, and vulnerable populations in the adjacent areas receive those services. Therefore, exploring the potential acquisition and/or lease of real estate properties close to MCJ for this population in furtherance of both ATI and “care first” initiatives is vital.

“Care first” is not just a mantra but one that requires action. Moving forward with this initial analysis will help create a County that provides safety and health for our most vulnerable Angelenos and end our reliance on mass incarceration.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors find that the proposed actions do not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors authorize and direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or her designee, in collaboration with the Director of Public Works, or his designee to:

- a) Use an amount not to exceed \$500,000 in the Care First, Jails Last project, Capital Project No. 87733, for the preparation of the proposed

⁶ Ibid.

master plan scoping document, to cover costs for project management and consultant services, and to amend the current as-needed contract with NAC Architecture, Inc. to increase the amount of that contract and, if necessary, to increase the term of that contract for the performance of this work, provided such amendments and/or extensions are in form approved by County Counsel and do not exceed the additional \$500,000 amount authorized herein.

- b) Take any other actions consistent with and/or necessary for the implementation of the foregoing actions, including the delegated authority to the CEO or her designee to execute any agreements with non-profits and other entities providing additional funds to support the Restorative Justice Master Planning efforts, provided that any such agreements are in form approved by County Counsel.
- c) Ensure that the master plan scoping document includes evaluations and recommendations on:
 - i) Placement and siting of various acute and sub-acute mental health beds as needed in the community as part of the scope of work for the Restorative Justice Master Plan with the goal of increasing the number of available beds countywide.
 - ii) Potential acquisition and/or lease of real estate properties in the proximity of MCJ to further implement the Alternative to Incarceration and Care First Jail Last initiatives for justice-impacted

and involved individuals and people experiencing homelessness
and houselessness.

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