

department of economic opportunity

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February 25, 2026

TO: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Kelly LoBianco, Director *Kelly LoBianco*

SUBJECT **IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN FOR
EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF LIFE
SCIENCES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY (ITEM NO. 7,
AGENDA OF JULY 15, 2025)**

On July 15, 2025, your Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion, introduced by Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, titled "Implementing Strategies and Action Plan for Equitable Development and Growth of Life Sciences in Los Angeles County." The motion directed the implementation of the [Life Science Industry Strategy and Action Plan \(2025-2030\)](#), which was released by Los Angeles County (LA County) in July 2025. This report provides a status update on all the Board's directives in that motion.

DIRECTIVE 1 – Initiate Implementation of Strategy and Action Plan

1a. Deploy Bioscience Loan Fund and Establish Tenant Improvement Fund (TIF)

Since the date the Life Sciences Motion was approved, the County of Los Angeles Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) has significantly increased available funding for the Strategy and Action Plan. Most notably, the State awarded \$24 million to the region—\$19 million to DEO—funded by California Jobs First funds to activate the Life Science Strategy and Action Plan. DEO spearheaded the region's application to the State, which awarded funding to the four interconnected projects summarized below. Only the \$19 million awarded to DEO under Project 1 will be administered by DEO. The remaining funds will be allocated directly to the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), BioscienceLA, and the Larta Institute for the projects led by those agencies. While DEO will not be responsible for funds allocated to

these partners, DEO will coordinate closely with their project leads to ensure alignment and to support the region's overall life sciences cluster strategy.

Project 1: Expand Life Sciences Infrastructure for Growth

- **Award Amount: \$19 million**
- **Lead: LA County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)**

Over the last decade, LA County expanded incubation space for life sciences firms, but bottlenecks have emerged at the graduation stage as growing firms lack affordable space once they complete the incubation stage. With extremely low space vacancy rates upon graduation, many early-stage companies leave the region for other jurisdictions where this space is more readily available. This project addresses LA County's shortage of affordable graduation-stage lab and manufacturing spaces through a Tenant Improvement Fund (TIF) for graduation-stage life sciences companies and a Graduation and Manufacturing Space Fund (GMSF) to develop specialized, multitenant life sciences facilities.

Project 2: Attracting Large Life Sciences Employers

- **Award Amount: \$700,000**
- **Lead: [Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation](#) (LAEDC)**

This project invests \$700,000 to support the attraction of 2–4 large life science companies to Los Angeles County, thereby securing commitments for up to 1,000 new jobs and helping catalyze inclusive economic growth across the bioscience sector. In addition to facilitation services (site selection, regulatory navigation, access to incentives, etc.), LAEDC plans to develop an investor guide and host investment summits and trade missions to catalyze the recruitment of target companies. This project is a critical part of the LA County Life Sciences Cluster, aligning public and private sector partners to attract anchor employers and good jobs for all Angelenos. *DEO will work in collaboration with LAEDC to help businesses overcome any barriers to establishing their business in LA County, including any challenges related to permitting and development.*

Project 3: Building the Life Sciences Ecosystem: BioscienceLA Asset Map Platform and Activation Campaign

- **Award Amount: \$920,000**
- **Lead: [BioscienceLA](#)**

BioscienceLA is leading the development of the Asset Intelligence Platform and Activation Campaign, two core tools that will transform Los Angeles' wealth of fragmented assets into a connected, coordinated bioscience ecosystem. By combining real-time data with community-driven storytelling, these efforts provide the visibility and alignment needed to accelerate inclusive job creation, expand economic mobility, and position the Los Angeles region as a globally competitive, equity-driven bioscience hub. The Asset Map Platform framework has been developed with diverse input from influential decision makers across life science subsectors that

include industry, education, policy, government, and community organizations.

Project 4: Fueling Sustainable Capital – Expansion of Heal.LA Platform

- **Award Amount: \$3.3 million**
- **Lead: [Larta Institute](#)**

The Fueling Sustainable Capital project expands and strengthens Larta’s existing Heal.LA platform, a proven commercialization and capital access accelerator for early-stage bioscience companies. The project supports companies in growing and scaling within Los Angeles County and bringing companies from outside the County to invest here, while positively impacting the health and healthcare needs of local communities. Utilizing California Job’s First (CJF) funds, Larta intends to provide customized technical assistance to early-stage companies to enhance their commercialization strategies and their investor appeal and deploy over \$1.8 million in direct capital infusions through the Larta Impact Fund. As of January 2026, Larta has initiated the “call for applications” for the next Heal.LA cohort of 30+ companies and initiated planning in advance of the Larta Impact Fund roll-out.

Collectively, these four (4) projects advance implementation of key actions within the Life Sciences Strategy and Action Plan. For example, Project 1 and Project 4 advance the expansion of graduation space and the funding for the retention and growth of promising companies, while Project 2 incentivizes large life sciences employers to the region. In addition, Project 3 strengthens overall cluster connectivity and collaboration through the creation of a life sciences asset map and also highlights the region’s value proposition through an activation campaign.

The CJF application to the State also sought funding for Life Sciences High Road Training Partnerships (HRTP) and to advance life sciences zoning/permitting reform. While these components were unable to be funded by the State at this time, DEO has identified and/or is pursuing other funding options to advance these critical projects.

In addition, the LA County Bioscience Loan Fund now has approximately \$8.79 million available, rather than the \$5.79 million previously identified in the Life Sciences Motion. DEO had set aside \$3 million from the LA County Bioscience Loan Fund for the Altadena Disaster Relief Small Business Loan Program, as directed by an [April 2025 Board motion](#). LACDA confirmed that its Small Business Loan Program is now complete and did not require the use of these funds, which means the funds can be returned to the Bioscience Loan Fund and be subsequently used towards meeting the County’s Life Science Strategy and Action Plan.

As directed by the motion, DEO developed a spending plan for these funds, prioritizing the most urgent and catalytic actions as directed by the motion and supplemented by the CJF award, including a Life Science TIF with a goal of \$10 million in total funding, as well as the GMSF and Life Sciences HRTP. The CJF funds will be spent over a two-year period. The below chart summarizes the available funds and DEO’s spending plan.*

Program/Strategy	State Funds	DEO Bioscience Loan Fund	Total
Life Science TIF	\$5.7 million	\$4.96 million	\$10.66 million
GMSF	\$11 million	\$0.792 million	\$11.792 million
Life Science H RTP	\$0	\$1 million	\$1 million
Business Commercialization Support, Zoning and Permitting	\$0	\$0.7 million	\$0.7 million
Program Administration, Staffing and Grant Reporting	\$2.3 million	\$1.34 million	\$3.64 million
Total	\$19 million	\$8.79 million	\$27.79 million

*Budget is subject to change based on factors such as negotiations with State of California, as well as program design and implementation factors.

In addition to significantly increasing available funding, DEO has put in place the critical infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the TIF, GSMF and other Action Plan strategies. These efforts include:

- Hiring of a Life Science Liaison to serve both as the County’s representative to industry stakeholders and to lead overall implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. DEO onboarded this critical position in January 2026.
- Establishing a Capital Access Lead to oversee DEO’s growing fund portfolio, including implementation of the TIF and GSMF. DEO onboarded this critical role in December 2025.
- Establishing a Capital Development Function to oversee DEO’s Capital Development Projects and to serve as co-lead for implementation of the TIF and GSMF, given their focus on expanding life sciences graduation space.

Key next steps for the TIF include 1) developing the program design and structure (including eligibility, matching requirements, equity criteria, award sizes, geographic considerations, terms, outreach, technical assistance and support) in consultation with industry stakeholders who will be engaged through a Physical Space Working Group targeted for launch by Q2 2026; 2) retaining a third-party administrator to administer the underwriting and distribution of the TIF; and 3) building-out a launch plan that includes a full package of assets and components, such as a press release, program website, marketing collateral materials/assets, program guidelines and FAQs.

DEO anticipates the TIF will award loans of \$300k-\$800k per tenant to approximately 15-25 early-stage life sciences companies, which will enable them to rapidly outfit graduation step-up spaces covering uses such as wet lab conversions and specialized equipment purchases. DEO will also consider concessionary loan structures given that early-stage firms are often pre-revenue, which may include longer-repayment periods, deferred payments, and low interest rates. DEO also intends, where feasible,

to advance equity and incentivize geographic clustering. DEO anticipates completing the program design and then launching the TIF by Q4 2026.

1b. Life Sciences H RTP

DEO was unable to secure funding for the Life Science H RTP via State CJF; however, DEO has identified \$1 million from the Bioscience Loan Fund to support the development of the Life Science H RTP. An H RTP is a worker-centered, industry-informed training program delivered by cross sector partners that yields quality jobs, equity, and climate resilience. Programs meet long-term hiring and training challenges for high-growth and evolving industries like the life sciences that promote economic mobility for workers. While presently there is not a Life Sciences H RTP in California, there are existing training programs and models to potentially leverage and formalize as an H RTP. Doing so requires comprehensive design and implementation guidance when integrating the program into DEO's broader H RTP infrastructure, which spans over 20 H RTP programs across LA County. DEO anticipates including this integration in a future round of its H RTP Fund for FY26.

DIRECTIVE 2 - Funding Plan and Partnership Strategy for GMSF and Zoning/Permitting Reform

2a. Establish GMSF

As noted above, DEO has allocated secured CJF funds and the BioScience Loan Fund to support the Life Sciences GMSF. Key next steps for the GMSF include 1) development of the program design (similar programmatic components to be developed in tandem with the TIF) in consultation with industry stakeholders and partners who will be engaged through a Physical Space Working Group targeted for launch in Q2 2026; 2) release of a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ)/Request for Information (RFI) to identify potentially viable graduation-space sites and projects; and 3) build-out of a launch plan that includes a full package of assets and components, such as a press release, program website, collateral materials/assets, program guidelines, and FAQs.

DEO anticipates the GMSF will award 2-3 projects—approximately \$5-7 million per development—to master-lease holders that will create up to 30,000-40,000 square feet of space for approximately 15-25 firms to stay and grow in LA County. DEO will ensure the program advances equity and incentivizes geographic clustering where feasible. DEO is also examining the possibility of providing additional technical assistance and support, particularly related to the commercialization of products, for companies housed at multi-tenant spaces. DEO anticipates completing the Program design and launching the Program by Q4 of 2026.

2b. Funding Plan and Partnership Strategy for Title 22 Reform Recommendations:

LA County is uniquely positioned to lead a new generation of life science innovation and inclusive economic growth. The region is home to a thriving network of startups, fast-growing incubators, and anchor firms, all supported by cross-sector collaboratives.

DEO and DRP are committed to developing a funding plan and partnership strategy to guide recommendations for Title 22 amendments that support life sciences development in LA County's unincorporated communities while addressing common challenges related to zoning and permitting.

The first step is extensive stakeholder engagement with industry leaders, anchor institutions, and community members. To that end, DEO and DRP can launch a Zoning and Permitting Workgroup comprised of industry stakeholders, experts, cities, and community representatives to identify and recommend potential Title 22 amendments as a foundation for a model ordinance for LA County's unincorporated communities, as well as identify potential partners in incorporated cities. DRP's existing Life Sciences Permitting Liaison can collaborate with the new DEO Life Sciences Liaison, mentioned in the above response to Directive 1, to facilitate discussions with the Zoning and Permitting Workgroup.

DRP and DEO anticipate that in Q2 2026 they will launch this Zoning and Permitting Workgroup to identify a package of critical changes that will inform the development of a model ordinance. However, as noted in the response to Directive 3, below, the Board cannot adopt the model ordinance for LA County's unincorporated communities unless DRP obtains funding for a consultant to complete a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis.

DIRECTIVE 3 – Identify Resources for Title 22 Reform

Developing Title 22 amendments to support life science development as a foundation for a model ordinance for LA County's unincorporated communities will require both internal staff resources as well as external funding for a consultant to complete a CEQA analysis. However, meaningful stakeholder involvement, including outreach to industry leaders, anchor institutions, community members, and other interested groups, as described in the above response to Directive No. 2b, is essential and must be completed first to ensure that the Title 22 amendments are informed, equitable, aligned with the Board's objectives, and reflect both the industry's needs and community priorities.

The proposed Title 22 amendments will consider establishing new definitions for life sciences uses and allow those uses in appropriate zones, along with related permitting and development standards. In addition, actions taken under the proposed Title 22 amendments are considered "projects" under CEQA and will require a CEQA analysis to comply with both LA County and State CEQA guidelines. When a project might have a significant effect on the environment, LA County is required to study the project's impact on air quality, water, traffic, and tribal cultural resources, among any other potential impacts to environmental resources. Dedicated funds will be needed to retain a consultant to prepare the CEQA analysis. Without this secured funding, the Board will be unable to adopt an ordinance for LA County's unincorporated communities.

DIRECTIVE 4 – Create Life Sciences Classification in EPIC-LA

The new classification mechanism to identify and track life science permit applications is now live within LA County's EPIC-LA online permitting system. All applications in EPIC-LA require DRP staff to select a proposed land use from a drop-down menu that aligns with land uses identified in Title 22, along with

the option to select additional details. As part of the system update, a “Life Science Project” option has been added to the additional details menu. This enhancement allows DRP staff to track life science projects. Selecting the “Life Science Project” option during intake ensures that these applications are accurately categorized and can be tracked over time. Selecting this option allows staff to generate reports on EPIC-LA which are related to project volume, processing timelines, and the geographic distribution of life science activities.

DRP’s Life Sciences Permitting Liaison continues to assist applicants in navigating LA County’s permitting process for development projects in unincorporated communities. To prioritize life science permit applications based on equitable indices and community benefits, DRP staff will utilize the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee Opportunity Area Map, specifically focusing on census tracts designated as “High Segregation and Poverty.” This map identifies areas that meet the standards for both concentrated poverty (defined as 30% of the population below the federal poverty line) and racial segregation (overrepresentation of people of color relative to the entire county). This methodology will support equitable and community-beneficial prioritization, consistent with the Board’s directive. After a life science project is identified as being within a “High Segregation and Poverty” census tract, DRP staff will be able to prioritize projects based on equitable indices and community benefits.

DIRECTIVE 5 – Life Sciences Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion

5a. Promote retention and growth

The CJF-funded projects being led by LAEDC and BioscienceLA will play critical roles in advancing the retention and growth of life sciences. LAEDC’s project seeks to attract 2-4 large life science companies to establish operations in LA County during the 2-year period of performance for the CJF grant, which would create up to 1,000 jobs and stimulate demand across the regional supply chain, generate momentum for additional business attraction, and strengthen the LA region’s position as a premier hub for bioscience innovation. DEO will work closely with LAEDC to support the success of this project, including prospecting and outreach, support related to site selection, regulatory navigation, and access to financial and permitting resources.

In addition, BioscienceLA will lead the development of an asset map that connects the region’s bioscience, economic and community resources, serving as a valuable tool in highlighting the region’s assets and resources for prospective and current life science companies. The Platform will be developed iteratively across three (3) interconnected modules: 1) Workforce (cradle-to-career); 2) Investment, innovation, and industry; and 3) Infrastructure (incubators, real estate, development opportunities, incentive geographies, etc.).

A pilot version of the Platform encompassing module 1) Workforce is anticipated by Q2 2026. Further, this project will also include an activation campaign to drive awareness of the region’s unique assets and value proposition. DEO will work closely with BioscienceLA on both components of the project.

Finally, DEO recently joined the City of Los Angeles, the California Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz), and LAEDC to Launch "LA is Open," a bold recovery campaign to boost the region's local economy by increasing business confidence, increasing business attraction in key sectors, and promoting tourism opportunities. DEO and regional life sciences partners will leverage this campaign as part of overall efforts to promote the region to prospective life science companies. DEO has recently onboarded a position to focus on Business Attraction in the hope of eventually expanding its capacity by establishing its Business Attraction and Retention team, thereby providing the resources needed to build out and implement additional programming.

5b. Highlight and facilitate access to currently available incentives

As DEO develops its Business Attraction and Retention Function and onboards the Life Sciences Liaison, it will initiate proactive outreach to current and prospective life science firms to better highlight currently available incentives such as the California Competes Tax Credit, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, California R&D Tax Credit, workforce development training grants and wage subsidies, customized training opportunities, and utility abatements. This also includes developing targeted materials that package and highlight these resources.

DEO will also work towards longer-term recommendations, identified in the Strategy and Action Plan, that require additional funding, such as low-interest loan offerings for biomanufacturing firms and an examination of potential new incentives such as the repurposing of County-owned land, sales tax exemptions and leveraging EIFDs to support life science uses and hubs.

5c. Identify and promote existing structures for life science uses

Life Science uses are being considered as part of the General Hospital and West Campus Capital Development Project, as well as the Willowbrook Wellness Campus Capital Development Projects.

In addition, LA County is working closely with The Lundquist Institute on the development of a Biotechnology Park located at the Southwest corner of the Harbor-UCLA Medical Campus, which will incorporate up to 250,000 square feet of laboratory, manufacturing, and office space, including space for graduation-stage companies.

The intended development of the biotech park is to grow and retain high-quality biotech jobs in Los Angeles County. By providing graduation space and room for expanding biotech firms, the development is specifically planned to attract and keep companies from relocating to other hubs across the country, in cities such as Boston, San Diego and San Francisco. This phased development will create a full life-sciences ecosystem, with labs, incubators, and tech park facilities that enable companies to advance from research to commercialization while remaining in LA County.

5d. Consult with industry partners and stakeholders on business attraction strategy

DEO will engage the future Physical Space and Zoning/Permitting Workgroups to identify gaps in technical assistance and potential service options as DEO builds out its Business Attraction and Retention offerings.

5e. Education and Outreach Campaign

As noted, DEO will collaborate through the *LA is Open* campaign and ecosystem partners around the development and launch of a strategic, multilingual, culturally competent campaign that promotes the region's strengths to investors, employers, and talent. DEO will also work with BioscienceLA to ensure the asset map and the campaign both incorporate County-specific resources and tools, such as DEO's Life Sciences Liaison and DRP's Life Sciences Permitting Liaison. In addition, DEO will highlight forthcoming industry resources, including the TIF, and will initiate direct outreach to industry stakeholders to introduce DEO's Life Sciences Liaison and build awareness of both Liaison positions and the support provided by the County.

5f. Plan to Reestablish the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund

DEO is reviewing the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund for potential program and guideline changes to optimize the program and to strengthen outcomes. One such option under consideration, and as recommended by DEO's Life Sciences Strategy and Action Plan, is the supplementation of existing funds to provide accessible capital to support biomanufacturing firms, which reduce the barriers to entry for living wage jobs and career pipelines. DEO anticipates returning to the Board this calendar year with recommendations.

DIRECTIVE 6 - Identify Additional Potential Funding Sources

As noted, the State awarded DEO \$19 million in CJF funding for the Expand Life Sciences Infrastructure for Growth Project. DEO will use this funding to help address LA County's shortage of affordable graduation-stage lab and manufacturing space through a TIF for graduation-stage companies and a GMSF to develop specialized, multi-tenant life sciences facilities.

DEO will continue to examine and pursue additional funding to support activation and implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. DEO is monitoring federal, state, and local funding opportunities to support the Life Sciences Strategy and Action Plan, as well as other industry initiatives in critical sectors. For example, DEO is monitoring H RTP funding opportunities through the Employment Development Department and industry transformation opportunities through the federal Economic Development Administration.

DIRECTIVE 7: Accept Funding and Execute Grant Agreements

DEO is in communication with the State to secure additional funding and anticipates receiving and executing the California Jobs First grant agreement for the \$19 million grant award in early 2026.

CONCLUSION

DEO looks forward to continued collaboration with Board Offices and life sciences ecosystem stakeholders to implement the Strategy and Action Plan. If you have any questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Leila Lee at LLee@opportunity.lacounty.gov.

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c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
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