



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI
Chief Executive Officer

January 31, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
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First District

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Third District

JANICE HAHN
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KATHRYN BARGER
Fifth District

ADVANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES (ITEM NO. 10, AGENDA OF AUGUST 14, 2018)

On August 14, 2018, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a Motion (Motion) by Supervisor Barger, directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), working with other departments, to conduct feasibility analyses and develop timelines for implementation of four economic development strategies, and report back to the Board within 60 days. In October 2018, the CEO requested a 90-day extension.

The four strategies are outlined in the Economy and Efficiency Commission's report issued on August 14, 2018, and included: 1) grow the biosciences sector; 2) integrate internal systems and add smart technology; 3) develop a robust pipeline of skilled workers; and 4) use technology-enabled services to improve the land entitlement process. The CEO, in consultation with the relevant departments have met, and will continue to meet, to plan implementation strategies in these four areas. The current status of these efforts is as follows:

1. Grow the Bioscience Sector

In December 2018, Bioscience Los Angeles County, Inc. (BioLA), was incorporated to serve as an innovation catalyst and entrepreneurial hub for government, research institutions, and private investors to accelerate startup activity and economic opportunity throughout the region. As a non-profit corporation, BioLA will bring together stakeholders that include academic institutions, research hospitals, investors, startups, mature companies, trade associations, and public agencies to advance innovation and ensure that the County benefits from the job creation that arises from commercialization of the cutting-edge bioscience research in the County of Los Angeles (County).

In September 2018, the CEO released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit organizations that are interested and qualified to capitalize, launch, and manage an investment fund supporting bioscience startup companies in the County, as well as the local ecosystem to which they belong. Based on sectoral research and responses from the Request for Information for Los Angeles Bioscience Investment Fund, issued in May 2018, the CEO concluded that there is sufficient capital demand and investment expertise to issue the RFP. The County intends to place a lead-investment in up to two Bioscience Investment Funds (Investment Funds). The Investment Fund(s) will make investments in local early stage bioscience firms and work to support the bioscience entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Board has approved \$15 million that can be allocated directly to the Investment Fund(s).

In addition to the creation of BioLA and the Investment Fund, the County also funded bioscience incubators at California State University, Los Angeles, and at LA BioMed on the Harbor-UCLA Medical Campus. The incubators will provide technical support and business services to assist researchers with advancing promising new biomedical discoveries to the next stage of commercialization. The County has set aside 15 acres on the Harbor-UCLA Medical Campus for the development of a biotech park and partnered with community colleges and industry leaders to implement Bio-Flex, a life sciences apprenticeship program. Finally, the County is exploring new solutions to streamline the land use and entitlement process for bioscience companies in the County unincorporated areas.

2. Integrate Internal Systems and add Smart Technology

The CEO recognizes the need to integrate the public-facing, online web pages of County departments. Currently, the 36 County departments and many related governmental agencies have websites that offer guidance and assistance to businesses (large and small), residents, and clients engaging the vast array of services provided by County departments and related agencies. These websites offer general information, access to public information and records, registration for County services, and the ability to pay taxes and fees.

The CEO surveyed the Chief Information Office (CIO), the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), and the Office of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) to identify existing efforts related to online business customer service portals. It was determined that both DCBA and WDACS are engaged in efforts to assist businesses and residents in navigating these various business-related County services and websites. The CEO determined that short-term and long-term goals should be established to develop an implementation strategy that clearly delineates the roles of the departments and feasible goals.

The short-term goals of the CEO will include (less than 12 months):

- Develop a governance structure and leadership for interdepartmental cooperation during the planning and ongoing maintenance of the County's integrated business customer service portal;
- Analyze the best practices of other jurisdictions;
- Develop system improvements that will allow for a concierge-like initial experience with easy referrals to other County departments;
- Choose a small group of departments to be included in the initial phase of integration, based on the most common business inquiries, and initiate process evaluations for those departments;
- Establish a central County website as the starting point for all information and inquiries, which should be no more than one click away from the main *lacounty.gov page*, and make improvements such as a *chat box*;
- Consider the branding and marketing of the central County site;
- Collect data on usage of the current County systems and develop metrics for measuring success;
- Examine what features are important to businesses by partnering with business groups that can provide feedback on their experiences accessing County services; and
- Develop an initial budget for additional investment and ongoing expenses.

The medium to long-term goals will include (more than 12 months):

- Integrate all County departments into the system;
- Integrate the more complicated County processes;
- Add smart and artificial intelligence features, consistent with and leveraging the CIO enterprise information management platform, to the system that will guide businesses to the appropriate destination; and
- Integrate social media into the County and departmental websites.

By establishing the goals listed above, the County will have a stronger online presence; and therefore, become more accessible to small and large businesses. In addition, the CEO will assure that departments proposing technological solutions to serve LA County businesses are coordinating and integrating with existing County efforts.

3. Develop a Robust Pipeline of Skilled Workers

There are seven local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) in the Los Angeles region operating workforce development systems that comply and fulfill the objectives of the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA). Coordination exists with community colleges and universities, as well as other educational partners, such as adult education and private vocational training schools. Through the efforts of the regional WDB's, partnerships exist with various educational institutions that already provide certificates and degrees that are targeted towards satisfying the needs of high growth industries. These high growth industries were selected based on the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation's study, "Los Angeles: People Industry and Jobs," which identified the industry clusters, as well as potential employment growth by industry.

Primarily through the WDACS, the County is also investing in a regional training system to develop skills in the workforce that will qualify workers for jobs in high growth industries. In July 2017, the Board directed WDACS to implement a Countywide Workforce Development Plan, in collaboration with the Departments of Public Social Services (DPSS), Probation, Mental Health, and other County departments. Goals of the Plan include: 1) mandating Federal WIOA performance measures, 2) standardizing language and tracking mechanisms, 3) entering into data sharing MOUs, and 4) leveraging Federal funds.

In addition to the above, WDACS is engaged in several efforts that support the recommendations made by the Economy and Efficiency report. For example, WDACS is partnering with the DCBA on entrepreneurial workshops, contracting connections, and on-the-spot small business certification. Another effort includes collaborating with DPSS to best serve their clients. WDACS and DPSS are sharing data, co-locating services, scheduling joint meetings between America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs), and DPSS job developers. WDACS is also collaborating with the Departments of Probation, Sheriff, and the Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR), to increase and improve employment opportunities for the reentry and justice-involved population. Also, a recent contract between DPSS and the City of Inglewood will provide Welfare-to-Work Vocational Intermediary and Direct Services to populations including California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS), General Relief Opportunities for Work (GROW), and eligible Transitional Age Youth (TAY).

Finally, the CEO has contracted the University of California, Berkeley's Institute for Research on Labor and Employment to evaluate the progress of the County's workforce development alignment efforts. To achieve greater efficiencies, it is important to get a clear picture of how the County's alignment efforts are progressing, and then assess the need for any new programs if gaps are identified within the existing services provided in the region. Following the completion of this assessment of workforce development alignment, the County will be strategically positioned to better align its existing programs and determine whether any new programs are warranted.

4. Use Technology-Enabled Services to Improve the Land Entitlement Process

The land entitlement process can be especially complicated and nuanced. The Department of Regional Planning offers services related to land development counseling, project/case intake and processing, environmental review, and zoning enforcement for the County unincorporated areas. The Department of Public Works provides: 1) building permits, survey and map checks; 2) land development services; 3) road and flood permits; and 4) collects numerous fees for services. These often-complex interactions with businesses and clients traditionally take place in-person with County staff.

The County has already developed several one-stop centers, where clients can engage staff from numerous County departments. The next step in the customer service process will be to automate, to the extent possible, the one-stop experience to an online experience. EPIC-LA was developed as the County's electronic permitting and inspections system. EPIC-LA allows users online access to various building and transportation permits, plan applications, and environmental services. EPIC-LA is being used by the development community as evidenced by the following statistics (from its start on November 30, 2015, to the present):

- 11,511 electronic payments made online
- 6,826 customers registered as online users
- 20 new users per day (average)
- 12,516 permit applications made online

The CEO will evaluate existing efforts by DCBA, WDACS, and other departments to determine how EPIC-LA can be more integrated into a future Countywide portal, proposed business portals and how the departments involved in the land entitlement process can identify points where permitting can be improved or automated.

Each Supervisor
January 31, 2019
Page 6

The CEO will report back to the Board again in 120 days on its progress in implementing these economic development strategies. Specific attention will be given to Strategy 2 (Integrate Internal Systems and add Smart Technology), and Strategy 4 (Use Technology-Enabled Services to Improve the Land Entitlement Process), as these efforts remain in their initial stage of development.

If you have any questions, please contact Doug Baron at (213) 974-8355 or dbaron@ceo.lacounty.gov.

SAH:JJ:DSB
JO:RM:yy

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Consumer and Business Affairs
Public Social Services
Public Works
Regional Planning
Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services