

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

JUNE 9, 2020

Supporting Revitalization of the Arlington Heights Community Through Investment in the Debbie Allen Dance Academy Pilot - Renovate Streetscape Program

The Renovate Façade Improvement Grant Program (Renovate Program) administered by Los Angeles Community Development Authority (LACDA) was designed to improve the exterior image and address building code violations in commercial properties in targeted areas within the County of Los Angeles (County) with the goal of supporting economic revitalization in traditionally underserved communities. Since its inception, the Renovate Program has invested \$5,613,827 in community businesses across all five Supervisorial districts, and to date, completed the renovation of 60 individual storefronts.

While the Renovate Program has generally focused on enhancing properties in unincorporated communities, the LACDA’s Board of Commissioners had previously authorized LACDA to use funds from the City of Los Angeles (City) to leverage and augment Renovate Program funds for revitalization efforts in the Pacoima and Reseda communities.

LACDA has recently recommended modifications to the Renovate Program guidelines to the Economic Development Policy Committee (EDPC) to expand the potential efficacy and reach of the Renovate Program. These modifications included, but were not limited to:

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- Clarity for individual project funding limits;
- Retiring the funding thresholds based upon the linear footage of a project storefront;
- Building on the success of the Memorandum of Understanding with the City to encourage additional partnerships with other, non-County agencies; and
- Expanding the focus of the Renovate Program to include streetscape enhancements.

As part of the preparation for post-COVID recovery efforts, LACDA has focused on expanding flexibility in Renovate Program project development and sought opportunities to assist in timely opportunities to support rapid economic recovery and community enhancements in underserved communities. A specific opportunity to demonstrate a nimble and effective response to these recovery efforts is to support the establishment of the new Debbie Allen Dance Academy (DADA) Project (Project). DADA is a non-profit organization that has provided comprehensive dance instruction and cultural enrichment programs to youth and adults across South Los Angeles for the past 25 years. Almost all activities at DADA are available free of charge. DADA currently provides these services to over 3,000 participants annually at its existing building at 3791 Santa Rosalia Drive along the Crenshaw Corridor, and is moving to 1850 South Manhattan Place in the Arlington Heights community with the objective of being able to expand its services to 9,500 participants annually. DADA has secured private and philanthropic investment to support the reconstruction of its new building, which will undoubtedly provide vital community services and serve as a creative safe haven and community center.

To support this much needed community improvement, up to \$300,000 in Renovate Program funds should be allocated for streetscape enhancements to the public right-of-way areas adjacent to the new building. The proposed DADA Pilot Renovate Streetscape Project (Project) would serve as a pilot project from which to evaluate the inclusion of streetscape services into the Renovate Program guidelines. Streetscape enhancements are a primary focus of urban planning, a vital component for installation of

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5G infrastructure and, much like façade improvements, represent opportunities to expedite the removal of blight and support economic development in the County's underserved communities. The streetscape enhancements proposed as part of the Project may include installation of a network-capable bus stop, e-mobility docking stations, a parklet to create a safe attractive place for community gathering, and lighting in the public right-of-way. Consistent with other Renovate Projects completed in partnership with the City, the Project will be completed with matching funds provided through the City.

Additionally, consistent with the feedback from the EDPC and to support flexibility and nimbleness in the Renovate Program, the guidelines should be expanded to authorize up to \$300,000 grants to be made to support revitalization efforts on other eligible properties moving forward.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ACTING AS THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:

- 1) Authorize the Acting Executive Director of the LACDA, or his designee, to:
 - a. Proceed with the Debbie Allen Dance Academy Pilot Renovate Streetscape Project (Project) located at 1850 South Manhattan Place in the Arlington Heights community of the City of Los Angeles;
 - b. Secure matching funds from the City of Los Angeles to leverage and augment the Project;
- 2) Find that approval of funding for the Project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Project is within a class of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and which meets the criteria set forth in section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 1 of Los Angeles County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G; and
- 3) Delegate authority to the Acting Executive Director, or his designee, to:
 - a. Execute amendments or, if necessary, terminations for conveniences, to the agreements with property owners, and any related documents

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necessary for administration of the Renovate Program in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per project; and

- b. Incorporate and amend the Renovate Program guidelines approved by the EDPC, as needed for the purposes described above as part of a continuation of the Renovate Program implementation.

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