AGN. NO.

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL July 15, 2025

Implementing Strategies and Action Plan for Equitable Development and Growth of Life Sciences in Los Angeles County

Life sciences is one of the highest impact industries in the world creating medical breakthroughs, quality jobs and expanding regional economic development. Los Angeles County (County) has the foundational resources needed for a thriving life sciences cluster including leading research institutions, top-tier healthcare systems, and a diverse workforce. However, over the past decade the local life sciences industry jobs only grew by 9%, lagging behind the national average of 28%, and behind peer regions that have seen job growth of more than 60%[1]. If the County had kept up with the national job growth rate, it would have created nearly 10,000 new life science jobs in the past 10 years.

The life sciences industry provides an important pathway into quality jobs with family sustaining wages. Nearly 60% of County life science jobs do not require a four-year degree, creating an accessible entry for workers.[2]

Additionally, the County has a more diverse workforce than its peer cities, yet the local life sciences workforce does not fully reflect the makeup of the County. Latinos comprise 49% of the general population in the County but only 32% of the life science workforce, and Black Angelenos comprise 9% of the general population but only 5% of the life sciences field. Furthermore, the County ranks second and third in the Country, out of the seven top life science clusters, on patents and research and development, but the

[1] Dalberg analysis based on BLS data. [b] https://www.bls.gov/oes/2023/may/oes191099.htm, 2023.
[2] Dalberg analysis based on BLS data. [b] https://www.bls.gov/oes/2023/may/oes191099.htm, 2023.

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County ranks fifth on startup formation with many startups choosing to leave due to limited physical space and capital investment.[3]

This is an important time for the County to close gaps, grow the life sciences industry, and build an equitable workforce pipeline into the industry. In 2022, the Board unanimously adopted Supervisor Mitchell's motion, "*Expanding the Life Sciences Industry While Creating Equitable, High-Road Career Opportunities for our Local Communities Los Angeles County,*" to leverage career exposure and direct the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to develop financial incentives to catalyze the life sciences industry, and to develop a strategy to accelerate inclusive growth in the life science sector.

The motion also directed the Department of Regional Planning (DRP) to develop innovative and streamlined approaches to the zoning and tenant improvement processes for life science startups to be able to grow in the County's unincorporated communities. Since then, DRP appointed a Life Sciences Permitting Liaison to assist startups in navigating the County regional permitting and zoning process. DEO commissioned Dalberg, a global consulting firm, to develop a strategic implementation report to grow the life science industry through equitable development and ensure community benefits, while also hiring an overall Life Sciences Liaison for the County, similar to the role of the County Film Office for the entertainment industry.

The report developed by DEO and Dalberg outlines a bold, data-driven, and actionable five-year Life Sciences Industry Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2030), co-designed with ecosystem leaders from across academic, industry, workforce, and community organizations. This strategy charts a path to create 10,000 new high-quality jobs regionwide by 2030, including 4,000 jobs in the County, and establishes the foundation for the County to become a global hub for health innovation by 2035. The plan emphasizes inclusive career pathways, commercializing local innovation, and retaining firms through expanded physical space and financial tools.

This report builds on prior County investments and prioritization of this sector, for more than a decade, and is the result of significant stakeholder engagement and review of available data, including more than 60+ interviews, nine focus groups, and input from a Life Sciences Advisory Board comprised of 17 key ecosystem stakeholders.

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[3] Dalberg analysis of BLS data. [b] "https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/dec/2020-census-dhc.html, 2020.

To deliver on this vision, the County must prioritize foundational actions that unlock firm retention and workforce development now, while preparing zoning amendments and permitting improvements and relational infrastructure in the years ahead.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the Director of the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and other relevant County departments, to implement the Life Science Industry Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2030), using a phased approach that prioritizes the most urgent and catalytic actions, including:
    a. Deploy the remaining funds in the Los Angeles County (County) Bioscience Loan Fund, currently totaling $5.792 million, for program and operational costs to initiate implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan. The funds should be used to prioritize loans to life sciences firms graduating from incubator programs, finance tenant improvements, and prevent relocation. Submit a written report back with a program launch plan in 150 days, and report back annually thereafter on program outcomes. Outreach and education to firms who may qualify for this funding should be prioritized to those led by and/or employing workers from historically underrepresented communities and geographies. Direct the Director of DEO to further pursue all available sources of funding to support fund implementation with the goal of expanding the program to include growing the fund to support the Life Sciences to $10 million, inclusive of pursuing philanthropic, industry, and municipal funding.
    b. Launch the life science workforce development initiatives identified in the Strategy and Action Plan by securing funds and investing up to $2 million in existing funds in DEO's High Road Training Partnerships and related workforce programs to align the programs with industry needs and target high-opportunity communities. The Director of DEO should coordinate with local workforce boards, community colleges, and high road employers and

report back in writing with an update on funding and program launch in 150 days.

2. Direct the Director of DEO to return to the Board in writing in 150 days with an implementation update on the following:
    a. A funding plan and partnership strategy for developing multi-tenant graduation space, including a competitive selection process for master lease holders as outlined in the Strategy and Action Plan.
    b. In coordination with the Director of DRP, a funding plan and partnership strategy with a cross-sector of industry partners, anchor institutions, and community stakeholders to craft recommendations to define, clarify, and incentivize life sciences development in the County's unincorporated communities via Planning and Zoning Code (Title 22) regulations and permitting procedures. These recommendations could include changes to incentivize mixed use development where lab space can be located next to office space – a hallmark of the industry's development. The consultations should include review of Title 22, including building height limitations, parking provisions, and other development standards.
3. Direct the Director of DRP, in coordination with the Director of DEO, and informed by feedback from stakeholder consultations, to identify the resources necessary to develop amendments to Title 22 regulations and permitting procedures for life sciences development in the County's unincorporated communities. The Title 22 amendments would inform zoning and permitting actions undertaken by potential partners in incorporated cities.
4. Direct the Director of DRP, in coordination with the Director of DEO, to create a clear classification within the County's EPIC-LA online permitting system to categorize and track life science permit applications and establish a methodology for prioritizing life science permit applications based on equitable indices and community benefits.
5. Direct the Director of DEO to develop and launch a Life Sciences Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion Program that supports implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan by:

a. Promoting the retention and growth of existing life sciences firms and the attraction of new firms to the County through proactive outreach, technical assistance, and marketing of the region's assets.
b. Highlighting and facilitating access to currently available County and State incentives, including but not limited to tax credits, wage subsidies, and Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts, which may be used for site remediation, utility upgrades, and other infrastructure improvements.
c. Identifying and promoting existing industrial, commercial, and mixed-use structures suitable for life science uses.
d. Consult with a coalition of industry partners, anchor institutions, and community stakeholders to provide advice to DEO for the business attraction and retention strategy, ensuring that implementation is informed by on-the-ground expertise and aligned with inclusive economic development goals.
e. Developing an education and outreach campaign to inform the industry that the County is open for life sciences uses, including but not limited to raising awareness about the Life Sciences Liaison within DEO and the Life Sciences Permitting Liaison within DRP, funding availability for tenant improvements, and assistance with site selection and workforce needs.
f. Creating a plan to reestablish the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund based on learnings from the prior program, with a focus on the Life Sciences, and provide recommendations for growing the fund.

6. Direct the Director of DEO, in collaboration with the CEO, and other relevant Departments, to identify additional potential funding sources to implement the Strategy and Action Plan, considering County, State, Federal and private sources for implementation.
7. Delegate authority to the Director of DEO, or designee, to accept new or additional funds to include but not be limited to the State of California, California Jobs First and other sources impacting the life sciences, and execute and/or amend agreements with grantors to implement funds impacting the life sciences.

8. Direct the Director of DEO to report back to the Board in writing in 150 days, and annually thereafter, on implementation of the above directives when a timeline has not otherwise been specified.

(CT/WG)