



MARK PESTRELLA, Director

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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REFER TO FILE

August 05, 2025

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

17 August 5, 2025

EDWARD YEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Supervisors:

**CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT CORE SERVICE AREA
FORMER HIGH DESERT HOSPITAL SITE DEMOLITION PROJECT
ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
ESTABLISH AND APPROVE CAPITAL PROJECT AND BUDGET
ADOPT, ADVERTISE, AND AWARD
CAPITAL PROJECT NO. 87868
FISCAL YEAR 2025-26
(SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 5)
(3-VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Public Works is seeking Board approval of the proposed Former High Desert Hospital Site Demolition Project; to adopt plans and specifications, advertise for construction bids, and authorize the award of the construction contract; and to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Consider the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Former High Desert Hospital Site Demolition Project, together with any comments received during the public review process; find that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgement and analysis of the Board of Supervisors; adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, finding that the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during project implementation; find on the basis of the whole record before the Board that there is no substantial evidence the project may have a significant effect on the environment; and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

2. Establish and approve the proposed Former High Desert Hospital Site Demolition Project, Capital Project No. 87868, with a total project budget of \$13,500,000.
3. Adopt plans and specifications that are on file with Los Angeles County Public Works for the construction of the Former High Desert Hospital Demolition Project, Capital Project No. 87868.
4. Instruct the Executive Officer of the Board to advertise the Former High Desert Hospital Site Demolition Project for bids to be received and opened on October 6, 2025, in accordance with the Instruction Sheet for Publishing Legal Advertisements.
5. Authorize the Director of Public Works or his designee to execute a consultant services agreement with the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder to prepare a baseline schedule for a \$2,000 not-to-exceed amount funded by the project funds.
6. Delegate authority to the Director of Public Works or his designee to make the determination that a bid is nonresponsive and to reject a bid on that basis; to award to the next apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder; to waive inconsequential and nonmaterial deficiencies in bids submitted; and to determine, in accordance with the applicable contract and bid documents, whether the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder has timely prepared a satisfactory baseline construction schedule and satisfied all conditions for contract award. Upon such determination, authorize the Director of Public Works or his designee to award and execute a construction contract, in the form previously approved by County Counsel, to the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder, if the low bid can be awarded within the Board-approved budget for the Former High Desert Hospital Demolition Project, to establish the effective date of the contract upon receipt by Public Works of acceptable performance and payment bonds and evidence of required contractor insurance, and to take all other actions necessary and appropriate to deliver the project.
7. Delegate authority to the Director of Public Works or his designee to execute any easements, permits, and utility connection agreements necessary for the completion of the project, provided that the costs related to these easements, permits, and agreements are included in the project budget.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The purpose of the recommended actions is to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP); approve the proposed project and project budget; adopt plans and specifications and advertise for construction bids; and authorize Public Works to award and execute a construction contract and easements, permits and utility connection agreements, as necessary, for the project.

Background

The High Desert Hospital was constructed in 1961 and stopped all services in 2008. The proposed project includes the demolition of the former High Desert Hospital and surrounding ancillary structures located at 44900 60th Street West in Lancaster. The Medical Examiner's Antelope Valley Regional Office currently occupies a building that is slated for demolition at the former High Desert Hospital site; however, prior to the start of demolition, these services will be relocated to a renovated modular building at the former Challenger Memorial Youth Center at 5300 West Avenue I in Lancaster, which was previously approved by the Board on January 23, 2024.

Since the closure of the former High Desert Hospital, the site has experienced several security issues, including vandalism, property damage, and trespassing. The security and maintenance costs associated with addressing posed threats to the County staff, equipment, and buildings are not sustainable, and the complete demolition of the site is recommended.

The proposed project scope includes the demolition of 22 structures on the 14.2-acre site, encompassing the former High Desert Hospital, Medical Examiner Antelope Regional Office, and all ancillary structures. The existing utilities, including water, sewer, gas, and electricity, will be abandoned in place and capped outside of the project site. Existing parking lots, perimeter curbs, and access roads will be retained. Site improvements include the construction of two stormwater detention basins and grading to optimize the site for potential future development and effective drainage.

Plans, specifications, and jurisdictional approvals have been completed. It is recommended that the Board adopt and advertise plans and specifications for construction bids as required by the California Public Contract Code.

In order to expedite construction, it is recommended that the Board authorize Public Works to award and execute a construction contract with the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder if the low bid can be awarded within the Board-approved budget noted in Enclosure A.

The proposed consultant services agreement requires the apparent lowest responsive and responsible bidder to prepare a baseline construction schedule that conforms to the County's schedule specification.

If approved, the project is anticipated to begin in January 2026 and be substantially completed in November 2026.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

These recommendations support the County Strategic Plan: North Star 1, Make Investments that Transform Lives, Focus Area Goal B, Employment and Sustainability, Strategy iii, Job Creation, driving economic and workforce development in the County; North Star 2, Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities, Focus Area Goal E, Economic Health, Strategy ii, Small Businesses, by removing an obsolete County facility; and North Star 3, Realize Tomorrow's Government Today, Focus Area Goal G, Internal Controls and Processes, Strategy ii, Manage and Maximize County Assets.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The total project budget is \$13,500,000 and includes plans and specifications, permit fees, construction, change order contingency, consultant services, inspection services, and County services. The Project Schedule and Budget Summary are included in Enclosure A.

A total of \$13,500,000 was previously allocated for this proposed project, including \$9,000,000 in the Fiscal Year 2021-22 supplemental budget and an additional \$4,500,000 in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 supplemental budget to fully fund the proposed project.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the Board's Civic Art Policy, amended on August 4, 2020, the proposed project

consists of site work and paving and, therefore, is exempt from the policy.

The plans and specifications include the contractual provisions, methods, and material requirements necessary for the project and are on file with Public Works' Business Relations and Contracts Division.

In accordance with Board Policy 5.270, Countywide Local and Targeted Worker Hiring, the project will require that at least 30 percent of the California construction labor hours be performed by qualified Local Residents and at least 10 percent be performed by Targeted Workers facing employment barriers. The project will also include a job coordinator who will facilitate the implementation of the targeted hiring requirement of the policy.

On February 28, 2023, the Board approved the execution of the Countywide Community Workforce Agreement, which will apply to projects with an estimated construction contract value of \$5,000,000 or greater. Therefore, the contractor and all subcontractors must comply with all terms and conditions of the Countywide Community Workforce Agreement which, among other things, increases work opportunities for those seeking to start a new career in the construction industry and promotes the hiring of underrepresented individuals on the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Initial Study (Enclosure B) was prepared for this project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The Initial Study identified the following potential significant environmental effects of the proposed project: Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Geology and Soils. However, prior to the release of the proposed MND for public view, revisions to the project were made or agreed to that would avoid these effects or mitigate them to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, as follows:

1. Biological Resources: Preconstruction surveys will be conducted and documented for Federal and State cited, nesting birds, mammals, and terrestrial reptiles by qualified biologists. If any impacts to any biological resources cannot be avoided, the appropriate measures set forth in the MND will be implemented.
2. Cultural Resources: Should cultural resources be encountered during construction activities, a qualified archaeologist will follow the measures set forth in the MND to treat the discovery. Should human remains be encountered, Public Works will be notified of the discovery and comply with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.
3. Geology and Soils: Erosion control, sediment control, and tracking control Best Management Practices will be implemented as part of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan as required under the State Water Resources Control Board's Construction General Permit.

The Initial Study and project revisions showed that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the County, that the project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study and project revisions, an MND was prepared for this project.

Public Notice was published in Acton-Agua Dulce News, Los Angeles Daily News, and Antelope Valley Press on November 7, 2023, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21092 and posted at the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk and with the State Clearinghouse in the Office of

Land Use and Climate Innovation pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21092.3. The draft MND was posted online on the Public Works webpage at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2023100652>. Hard copies of the draft MND were made available for public viewing at the Lancaster Library; Quartz Hill Library; and at Public Works, Project Management Division I. A copy of the Notice of Intent was posted at the Los Angeles County Clerk, and a banner was posted at the main entrance to the project site along 60th Street West. The Notice of Intent was also mailed as a hard copy to responsible agencies in accordance with Section 21092 of the California Public Resources Code and to Native American tribes and individuals who may have knowledge regarding Native American tribal cultural resources.

During the 30-day public review period, a total of three comment letters were received, one from a California Native American tribe and two from public agencies. Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians requested update to the language in the Tribal Cultural Resources section to reflect the Tribal Cultural Resource language. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife suggested that the County take steps to protect the burrowing owl, legless lizards, and bats. The County responded by incorporating additional surveys and protections in the MMRP, where appropriate. California Department of Transportation recommended that the County work with that agency for a designated truck route for construction trucks and reminding the County of its transportation permits. The County responded by incorporating an additional project design feature in the MMRP.

Responses to the comments were sent to the commenting agencies and are included in the final MND at Appendix H (Enclosure B). Notice to commenting public agencies was completed in accordance with Section 21092.5 of the California Public Resources Code. Other than the comments submitted by the California Native American tribe and the public agencies noted above, the County received no other comments regarding the MND.

In addition, all tribal cultural resources requirements of California Environmental Quality Act have been met and will be documented. Public Works contacted the Native American Heritage Commission to request a review of the Sacred Lands File database regarding the possibility of Native American cultural resources and/or sacred places in the project vicinity that are not documented in other databases. The Native American Heritage Commission provided a list of Native American tribes and individuals who may have knowledge regarding Native American tribal cultural resources. Public Works subsequently contacted the following Native American tribes requesting any information they might have regarding cultural resources in the area: Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians—Kizh Nation, Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, San Fernando Band of Mission Indians, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Serrano Nation of Mission Indians, and the Tejon Indian Tribe. In addition, five tribes requested the County in writing to be informed of all project notifications pursuant to California Public Resource Code Section 21080.3.1. The five tribes are the Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians—Kizh Nation, Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, and the Tejon Indian Tribe. No tribe requested consultation related to this project under Assembly Bill 52. However, the County will notify the five tribes if unknown subsurface tribal cultural resources are uncovered during construction-related ground disturbance and conduct construction activities in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code as stipulated in a project design feature.

The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of the proceedings upon which the Board's decision is based in this matter is at Los Angeles County Public Works, Project Management Division I, 900 South Fremont Avenue, 5th Floor, Alhambra, CA 91803. A copy of the MND and MMRP is also available at the following link <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2023100652>.

The project is not exempt from payment of a fee to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife pursuant to Section 711.4 of the Fish and Game Code to defray the costs of fish and wildlife protection and management incurred by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Upon the Board's adoption of the MND, Public Works will file a Notice of Determination with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk in accordance with Section 21152 of the California Public Resources Code and pay the required filing and processing fees with the Registrar Recorder/County Clerk.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Advertising for construction bids will be in accordance with the County's standard Instruction Sheet for Publishing Legal Advertisements (Enclosure C).

The contract opportunity will be listed on the "Doing Business with the County" and "Do Business with Public Works" websites. Public Works will also inform the local small business enterprises about this opportunity for those certified by the County of Los Angeles Department of Consumers and Business Affairs.

Participation by Community Business Enterprises (CBE) for the project is encouraged through Public Works' CBE Outreach Program and by monitoring the good faith efforts of bidders to utilize CBE.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the recommended actions will have no impact on services provided to the public. The Medical Examiner's Antelope Valley Regional Office will be relocated prior to the start of the demolition work.

CONCLUSION

Please return one adopted copy of this Board letter to Public Works, Project Management Division I.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Pestrella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and last name "Pestrella" clearly distinguishable.

MARK PESTRELLA, PE

Director

MP:HA:cg

Enclosures

c: Chief Executive Office (Capital Programs
Division)
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors

ENCLOSURES A-C

August 5, 2025

**CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT CORE SERVICE AREA
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(3-VOTES)**

This Board letter has large enclosures.

Click on link to access:

[Former High Desert Hospital Site Project \(Enclosures-FTP Link\)](#)

Board meeting date: August 5, 2025

Community Services Cluster meeting date: July 16, 2025

Health and Mental Health Services Cluster meeting date: July 16, 2025