

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

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FEASIBILITY OF REPURPOSING THE LAC+USC GENERAL HOSPITAL BUILDING FOR HOUSING AND MIXED USE PURPOSES

Since opening its doors in 1933, the historic Los Angeles County General Hospital (General Hospital) served as a beacon of hope, healing and caring for millions of Angelinos. For decades, the General Hospital provided much needed health care services for all County residents, particularly for the most vulnerable individuals. It also served as a major training site for generations of physicians completing their Graduate Medical Education and as the birthplace of Emergency Medicine.

The General Hospital is a spectacular 1.5 million square foot, 19-story, historic Art-Deco building that sits atop the largest County health campus, surrounded by some of Los Angeles County’s traditionally underserved communities in Boyle Heights, Lincoln Park, East L.A. and El Sereno. Due to the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, the County committed to constructing a replacement hospital, and upon opening the new medical center in 2008, the General Hospital became largely vacant. No direct patient care services remain at the General Hospital. Additionally, significant alterations or demolition of the building are not viable options, due to its historic designation.

Consistent with the General Hospital’s emblematic mission, vision, and history to serve the most vulnerable residents of our region, and advance the County’s overall mission to address our current housing crisis needs and provide exceptional health services, it behooves the County of Los Angeles to bring this iconic County asset back to life.

Given the County’s tremendous need for homeless, low income, and high-need population residential options, and specifically in the area surrounding the LAC+USC Medical Campus, the General Hospital could contribute significantly to addressing that need by providing a number of residential units and related services for future residents and the broader County community. This reuse would complement the LAC+USC

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Foundation's Wellness Center that occupies the General Hospital's ground floor and provides both wrap-around and community services to the LAC+USC Medical Campus visitors. Additionally, the potential reuse of the General Hospital can leverage the Restorative Care Village's vision to provide holistic care to our residents. Phase one of the Village's vision has recently moved forward through robust collaboration with County Chief Executive Office, Health Agency and Departments, and the LAC+USC Health Innovation Community Partnership.

To make a clear and informed choice on how to proceed with a mission-aligned reuse of the General Hospital as a housing and mixed-use building, a significant amount of technical analysis and due diligence must be completed. In addition, research needs to be conducted to identify and leverage possible creative financing mechanisms which may accelerate the successful reuse of the General Hospital. These include various tax credit programs, such as Historic Preservation Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits, and Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Additionally, the Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 created Opportunity Zones to stimulate investment into challenged census tracts, which include the LAC+USC Medical Campus. The establishment of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District, obtaining other federal and state grant monies, and pursuing Public Private Partnerships are all possible solutions to allow this historic icon to once again serve as a beacon of hope, and help the surrounding communities and our great LA Region.

Through a thoughtful well executed process, this incredible resource, which today lies idle and in significant disrepair, will be transformed into a marquee facility that again fuels hope, health, and caring for many Angelinos for the years to come.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the County CEO to immediately lead a detailed feasibility study and strategic plan process with outside experts who possess specialization in historic adaptive reuse, economic development and affordable housing financing, large scale building engineering and seismic retrofits, environmental planning, and community engagement. To advance this process, the CEO will consult and collaborate with County representatives from Housing for Health, CDC, Health Agency, LAC+USC Medical Center, DPW, and Regional Planning. The CEO will collaborate with the LAC+USC Health Innovation Community Partnership and other stakeholders, to create a robust community engagement process.
2. Direct the CEO to report back to the Board by Fall 2019 with a detailed feasibility study and strategic plan to identify reuse opportunities and constraints with the purpose of soliciting development proposals.

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