



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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FESIA A. DAVENPORT
Chief Executive Officer

April 29, 2022

To: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport
Chief Executive Officer

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FEASIBILITY OF REPURPOSING THE LAC+USC GENERAL HOSPITAL BUILDING FOR HOUSING AND MIXED-USE PURPOSES (ITEM NO. 4, AGENDA OF NOVEMBER 13, 2018)

Pursuant to your Board's direction on November 13, 2018, we are transmitting for your Board's consideration a completed feasibility study for the adaptive reuse of County General Hospital and the West Campus of the LAC+USC Medical Center. The study is attached via this link: [General Hospital Feasibility Study April 2022 \(http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1123695_GeneralHospitalFeasibilityStudyApril2022.pdf\)](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1123695_GeneralHospitalFeasibilityStudyApril2022.pdf)

Background

The iconic County General Hospital is located on County-owned land within the City of Los Angeles, adjacent to the communities of Boyle Heights to the south, Lincoln Heights to the north, and El Sereno and unincorporated East Los Angeles to the northeast and southeast, respectively. The hospital, which is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, was designed in the late 1920s and completed in 1933.

The structure generally consists of several wings and a center spine of 19 stories and has a total of 1.2 million square feet of space originally designed as a hospital. An elevator tower on the southern façade of the hospital was added in 1967 to support the 1,200-bed hospital.

In 1994, the hospital suffered significant damage from the Northridge Earthquake, and only the lower four stories and the basement remain in use. In 2008, General Hospital was primarily vacated when the replacement LAC+USC Medical Center was completed.

Presently, about 1,000 staff representing the County, LAC+USC Medical Center, The Wellness Center, non-profits, and other government functions operate in the General Hospital building.

West Campus is the 35-acre portion of the LAC+USC Medical Center Campus north of State Street across from General Hospital and south of Mission Road. West Campus has approximately 12 acres available for development after setting aside property for future phases of the Restorative Care Village, future expansion of the LAC+USC Medical Center, and the existing Medical Examiner-Coroner facility. The Pharmacy and adjacent Tunnel, the latter of which was constructed as part of constructing General Hospital, offer opportunities for creative reuse. The County would need to consolidate or replace some functions now located in this underutilized West Campus area to support community needs.

On November 13, 2018, your Board approved a motion directing my office to lead a detailed feasibility study and strategic planning process that was inclusive of the considerations and requirements of impacted County departments, outside agencies, and consulting experts. Your Board also directed my office to engage in robust community engagement to inform the proposed adaptive reuse options.

The final feasibility study was initially due in Fall 2019. However, the study delivery date was extended several times to allow for an expanded study scope that included West Campus, and additional community engagement on the expanded scope. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic added further delay as the County focused its efforts on public health measures and community support services.

Summary of Community Engagement Efforts

As directed by your Board, the preparation of the feasibility study involved extensive community engagement, which is described in detail in Appendix B of the study. To guide community engagement planning and execution, my office established both a Community Engagement Team consisting of outreach consultants with experience outreaching to the communities in and around General Hospital, as well as a Community Engagement Steering Committee consisting of leaders from more than 20 local community-serving agencies and nonprofit organizations. When the community engagement process concludes in early June, we will have conducted 5 Community at Large meetings, 15 Community Engagement Steering Committee meetings, over 20 presentations to the Health Innovation Community Partnership (a collaboration between the County, health agencies, community-based organizations, schools, local businesses and others to address the community's priorities), 3 pop-up events, over a dozen stakeholder interviews, and over 25 informal discussions and additional meetings.

From these meetings, we documented community stressors including economic impacts to the community from COVID-19, gentrification and displacement, unemployment, and a lack of open space, among others; as well as community priorities, including affordable housing for deeply low, extremely low, and very low-income residents, affordable retail, community serving amenities and access to health food, among others.

Summary of the Feasibility Study

The feasibility study concludes that General Hospital and portions of West Campus are underutilized and represent an opportunity to meet the pressing needs of the community and the region. The study presents a proposed Reuse Framework for General Hospital and West Campus that identifies community priorities uses, County requirements, and technical considerations.

Importantly, the Reuse Framework incorporates community priorities and uses as presented in the graphic below:

- | Community Priorities / Uses |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Affordable housing, including deeply and extremely low income, and for families• After-school Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics center• Arts / Culture spaces• Commemorative spaces• Community services spaces• Health and social support services space• Library• Locally based retail• Neighborhood Grocery store• Open space• Parking• Preschool / Daycare• Senior center• Subsidized to low cost extended stay hotel to support patient families receiving care at the Medical Center• Workforce and economic development |

Additionally, the feasibility study takes into account County requirements, including ensuring the continuity of effective operations of the LAC+USC Medical Center, applicable code requirements, and consistency with Board policy requirements, including community benefits, local and targeted worker hire, and goals of the Countywide Sustainability Plan.

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Finally, the feasibility study identifies technical considerations associated with adaptive reuse, which are largely driven by the age, condition, and size of the building. These considerations include potential environmental and hazardous materials abatement, structural improvements, mechanical, electrical and plumbing system upgrades, and additional parking to support housing and other uses in General Hospital and on West Campus, among others.

Funding Considerations

Redeveloping General Hospital and parts of West Campus will require significant investment. Assuming a private sector-led implementation, numerous funding sources could be leveraged to develop the proposed project, including private market rate debt and equity and federal and state low-income housing tax credits, among other funding sources. The feasibility study did not evaluate the cost of the proposed project. Cost estimates will be prepared in later phases once a project scope is defined.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Kelly Quinn at (213) 974-2318 or via email at kquinn@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:JTC
KQ:kb

Attachment

c: County Counsel
Public Works
Regional Planning
Los Angeles County Development Authority