

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

July 26, 2022

**Cementing LA County’s Commitment to Historic General Hospital**

In November 2018, Supervisor Hilda L. Solis authored a board motion, unanimously approved by the County Board of Supervisors (Board), directing the County Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to draft a feasibility study for the adaptive reuse of the County’s General Hospital on the County of Los Angeles’ LAC+USC Campus.

General Hospital, which opened in 1934, is a Los Angeles regional landmark known for its iconic architecture and service to millions of Angelinos. It is also credited as the birthplace of Emergency Medicine. A spectacular 1.2 million square foot, 19-story, Art-Deco building sitting atop the County’s largest health campus, General Hospital is surrounded by traditionally underserved communities, including Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights, East LA, El Sereno, Northeast Los Angeles, and Chinatown. The campus is also marred by a dark history of forced sterilization of Latina, particularly Mexican, women from 1968 to 1974. Any intentional efforts to address systemic racism and build more equitable approaches to county services must confront these most egregious past inequities.

MOTION

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

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The 1994 Northridge Earthquake damaged the structure and spurred the enactment of new hospital safety regulations, causing General Hospital to fall out of earthquake and fire safety compliance. The County built a new hospital complex next door and in 2008 moved its medical services to the new complex.

While most of General Hospital remains vacant and in disrepair, the lower floors of the building remain active and were recently remodeled. Nearly 7,000 people regularly use the building for offices or The Wellness Center, which occupies the building's first floor. The Wellness Center (Center) works in tandem with LAC+USC Medical Center providers to deliver (and facilitate through associated non-profit organizations) wrap-around services and community spaces for patients and local community members. County departments, including the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, are among the Center's partners. A large portion of the office space in General Hospital belongs to County departments, including DHS, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Other tenants include the Navy Medicine Operational Training Center and non-profits.

At the April 2022 board meeting, the CEO presented its General Hospital and West Campus Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study): [http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1123695\\_GeneralHospitalFeasibilityStudyApril2022.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/lac/1123695_GeneralHospitalFeasibilityStudyApril2022.pdf). The study was led by the CEO, who collaborated with outside experts in historic adaptive reuse construction, large-scale building engineering, seismic retrofits, and environmental planning, among other subjects.

The Feasibility Study explores ways to restore and reuse General Hospital in a

manner that aligns with the community's priorities and is consistent with the hospital's over 150-year-old mission – serving the County's most vulnerable residents and providing exceptional health services. The Feasibility Study's reuse framework includes affordable housing and expanding wrap-around Wellness Center services, among other community-supported suggestions. The Feasibility Study also identified structural upgrades required for the building to comply with Title 24 for a mixed-use renovation, that includes housing, commercial, and retail space.

To carry the community's desires forward, in February 2022, Supervisor Solis dedicated \$200,000 from the First District's share of Catalytic Development Funds via Board motion to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the site. Initially led by the Los Angeles County Department of Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services, the RFP is being prepared by the new Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO).

With long-term reuse plans moving forward and the building currently being used, the County should explore commencing work on the structural upgrades identified in the Feasibility Study ahead of the RFP to expedite the long-term plans and bring the current building into earthquake and fire compliance.

California's State Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23, approved by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Newsom in June 2022, allocates \$50 million toward General Hospital's reuse efforts. The State's funds are essential for beginning the structural upgrades and bringing General Hospital into fire and earthquake compliance. Up to an additional \$14.7 million in unspent funds in the CP#69698-LAC-USC Masterplan is available for reallocation to General Hospital structural upgrades. There is also a

unique opportunity for philanthropy to fundraise up to \$10,000,000 from local funders. Another \$50 million may be generated by establishing an Enhance Infrastructure Financing Plan (EIFD) along with unallocated American Recovery Program funds. However, additional capital will be required to complete the work. To leverage the County and State's appropriations to General Hospital and identify and pursue additional state and federal funding opportunities, the County should analyze the costs to finance these infrastructure improvements and identify an appropriate phasing schedule.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors

1. DIRECT the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in coordination with the Treasurer-Tax Collector, Los Angeles County Development Authority, the Department of Health Services, and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), to report back in 120 days with the following for the Board's consideration:
  - a. A plan detailing the project's phasing and a schedule for scoping documents and a design-build solicitation for the critical structural upgrade components identified in the LAC+USC Medical Center General Hospital and West Campus Feasibility Study, ahead of the Public Private Partnership Request for Proposals (RFP). The plan should include, a budget with funding sources, and consider any required environmental studies, hazardous materials removal and abatement, structural upgrades, and seismic improvements. The phasing plan should identify the entity(ies) that would be responsible for delivering the improvements and the work that can be accomplished with the currently identified funding, including the State's \$50

million general fund allocation, and any gap in funding needed to complete the structural upgrades identified by the CEO in the Feasibility Study;

- b. A financing plan to address any identified funding gap that considers, among other things, state and federal grant opportunities, tax credit programs, Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Public-Private Partnerships, and Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, and includes all timelines the Board must be aware of to draw down federal and state funding and a plan for other funding opportunities;
2. DIRECT the Acting Director of the Department of Mental Health to report back in 30 days on the availability of the local share of No Place Like Home funds and the possibility to allocate up to \$50 million of these funds to the General Hospital and West Campus project for the construction of permanent supportive housing units;
3. DIRECT the CEO to allocate \$10 million from CP 87733 Care First, Jails Last to the General Hospital and West Campus project;
4. DIRECT the CEO's Homeless Initiative to identify up to \$20 million of Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funds in the subsequent rounds of application and work with the City of Los Angeles to leverage any of the City's share of HHAP funds and report back in 30 days with recommended allocation;
5. DIRECT the CEO's Office of Strategic Partnerships to work with LAnSync (at the California Community Foundation) to convene funders and explore investments to support the General Hospital and West Campus project;
6. Direct the CEO along with the DEO to identify and allocate any unspent First District share of Economic Development Acquisition funds or any other Economic

Development funds;

7. DIRECT the DEO, in coordination with the CEO, to report back in 45 days with an updated General Hospital and West Campus RFP timeline for predevelopment activities and release of an RFP with a private, public partnership development model;
8. DIRECT the CEO's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch to communicate and leverage the County's financial commitment to the General Hospital and West Campus project with State and federal officials to support additional grant and appropriations requests; and
9. Establish a new CEO Capital Project number for upgrades, retrofit, and restoration work needed for General Hospital and transfer \$14.7 million in unspent Capital Project Number 69698-LAC+USC Masterplan and any future State, Federal, Regional and local funding from the above directives to this new fund.

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