

EXECUTIVE OFFICE



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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September 30, 2020

TO: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn

FROM: Celia Zavala
Executive Officer

**SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES COUNTY ROADMAP TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY
BOARD MOTION (APRIL 28, 2020, AGENDA ITEM 20) – PROSPER LA
QUARTERLY REPORT (SEPTEMBER 30, 2020)**

On June 29, 2020, the Prosper LA working group reported on its efforts on the County's Roadmap to Economic Recovery Board motion (April 28, 2020) as part of the County's reconstitution efforts.

As part of the motion, the Board directed the Executive Officer of the Board to work with the Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC), in consultation with the Small Business Commission (SBC), and the Citizens' Economy & Efficiency Commission (EEC), to report back to the Board quarterly on 1) creating a working group to encourage innovative ideas from County employees, businesses and labor partners that could streamline the County's contracting process and encourage strategies to engage and assist businesses; and 2) developing a website and email contact to accept and promote innovative and thoughtful ideas from Department staff, businesses and the public to streamline contracting, assist businesses and identify potential cost-savings actions that could be taken by each department.

These directives are part of a comprehensive countywide effort, inclusive of partnerships with the community, businesses, and nonprofits, to identify actionable ideas to spur economic recovery.

The following are the updates on our efforts:

WEBSITE LAUNCH AND EMAIL CONTACT

The working group launched ProsperLA.lacounty.gov on June 30, 2020. The website invites the public, County employees, and other interested stakeholders to submit ideas on various County practices. We notified County departments, businesses and non-profits, as well as associations and philanthropic organizations familiar with government processes, of the website. We are happy to report that various organizations (e.g., Board of Supervisors, County departments, Commissions, cities/other jurisdictions, nonprofits, professional organizations, etc.) have promoted and/or continue to advertise the website within their organization and constituents.

On July 29, 2020, the working group met to evaluate the design, ease of use, and effectiveness of the website. Based on feedback, several enhancements were made to the idea intake form, including the capability to translate the website into ten languages, including Armenian, Chinese, Filipino, Korean and Spanish.

PROSPER LA IDEAS

The Board motion directed the working group to promote innovative and thoughtful ideas from County department staff, businesses, and the public to streamline contracting, assist businesses, and identify potential cost-savings actions that could be taken by each department. This effort is part of the County's roadmap to economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We created the idea intake form to address these specific topics and categories.

Since the website launched, we received a variety of ideas from both the County workforce and the general public. Between July 1 and August 31, 2020 (the cut-off date for this report), we received a total of 85 ideas categorized as follows: contracting process (14), business assistance (14), cost savings (34), and other (23).

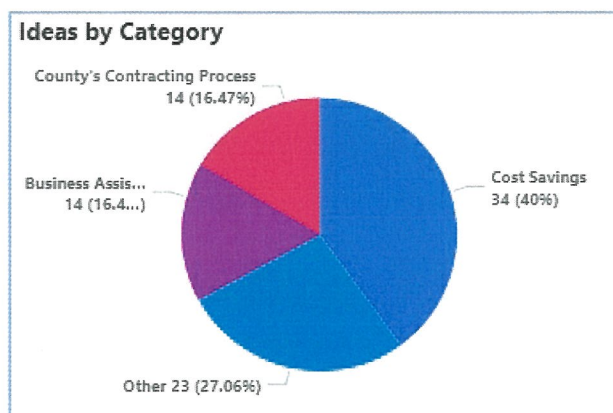
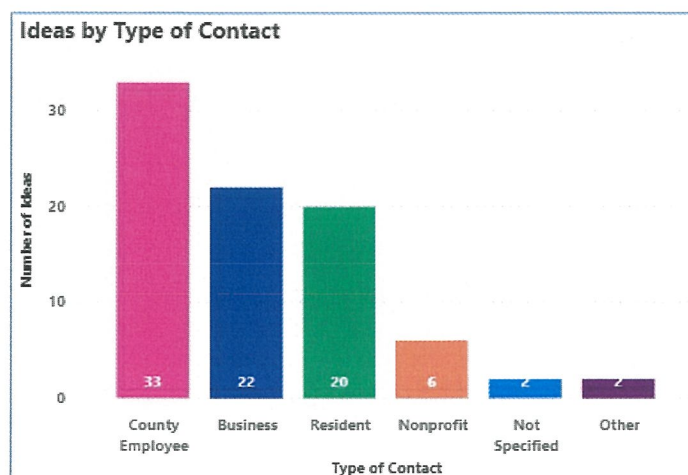


Table 1: Ideas by Category for reporting period July 1 through August 31, 2020. Approximately 40% (34) of the ideas were identified as cost savings.

The idea creators identified themselves as County employees (33), businesses (22), residents (20), and nonprofits (6), and four identified as other or did not specify their contact type.



*Table 2: Ideas by Type of Contact for reporting period July 1 through August 31, 2020.
Approximately 40% (33) of those who submitted ideas were County employees.*

The majority of the ideas (79%) included either adequate descriptions of the problems/issues and proposed a solution or provided adequate information to be referred to a County department for further review and evaluation. However, 6% were incomplete or lacked substance, and another 15% were unrelated to the topic areas (e.g., compliance with Brown Act), directed to non-County agencies (e.g., Department of Motor Vehicles, City of Los Angeles, etc.) or general comments about reopening the schools and the economy.

These ideas are summarized in Attachment 1 of this report. However, a few of the more notable ideas proposed include:

Cost Savings

- Reduce real estate expense by extending telework post pandemic, increasing telework opportunities to staff, and/or implement desk sharing.
- Standardize core administrative functions countywide. The resulting efficiencies will streamline processes while freeing up resources for operational service delivery instead of administrative process governance.

Contracting Process

- Unbundle large contracts to give smaller firms an opportunity to compete.
- Shift the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to an online application process with no hard copies required.
- Conduct surprise audits of county vendors subject to review to identify potential fraud, theft-related crimes, and waste.

Business Assistance

- Partner with a major credit card company to create a County credit card (e.g., LACard). Users earn points when they shop at designated businesses, which can be redeemed at County owned businesses, museums, events, etc.

- Introduce a new marketing program called "Shop Local LA". This program would offer "Advertising Grants" to small and medium sized locally based businesses.
- Assemble all business assistance programs under one department and utilize community stakeholder groups to provide business assistance resources, set goals and incentives.

Other

- Bridge the digital divide to bring in-home low or no cost solutions that connect underserved communities. Also extend a secure, robust wi-fi connectivity to outside County parks, libraries, and other County buildings, for greater access by the public.
- Develop a "green" grading system for local restaurants who make the effort to reduce waste, plastic containers, use local products; post these grades at their establishment; and create a local app for patrons to easily find these restaurants.
- Assemble an exhibit to showcase all artwork created during the lockdown.
- Develop an app to provide the public with real time crowd density assessments geographically, to allow them to make informed decisions on adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Several ideas have been either been implemented (e.g., telework, use of sidewalks and street closures for business use, allow barbers to set up on sidewalk), relate to ongoing efforts by County departments (e.g., housing for homeless), or general comments on reopening schools and the economy.

In addition to tracking data by category and type of contact, we also monitoring responses by location. Of the 85 ideas, 41 (48%) originated from within the City of Los Angeles (by zip code). The top contributing cities are listed below.

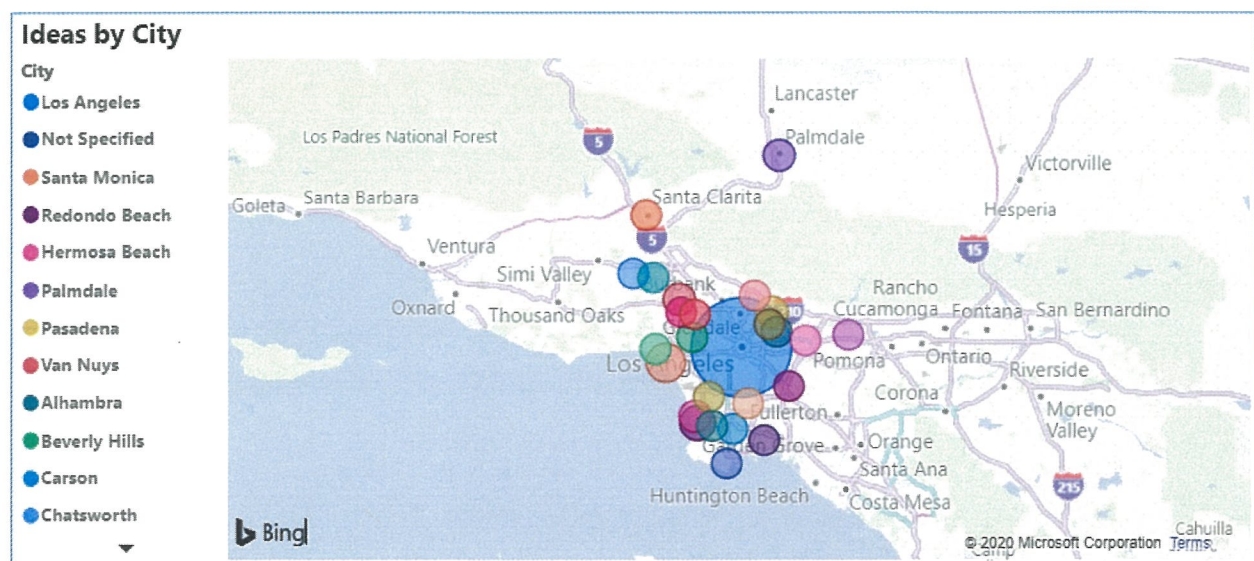


Table 3: Ideas are tracked geographically by zip code (if specified). Ideas originated from approximately 27 identifiable cities/areas within the County.

Although, Prosper LA working group members represent various industries and bring expertise and external interests, County staff have an understanding of departmental operations that is key to determining how and if an idea will succeed. We have requested the related County departments to further evaluate the 85 ideas received through the website. To ensure transparency of the review, consideration, and implementation of these ideas, we asked County departments to provide a status on the feasibility, cost effectiveness, and/or the potential for implementation of these ideas. A status summary report will be included in our subsequent reports to the Board. The next report will also include recommendations from the Internal Services Department on County procurement and contracting procedures.

We would like to thank members of the Quality and Productivity Commission, Small Business Commission, Citizen's Economy and Efficiency Commission, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and the Internal Services Department for their valuable insight and active participation on the County's recovery efforts.

Additional information on these ideas are available upon request. Please send your inquiries to idea@prosperla.lacounty.gov. If you have any questions, please call me at (213) 974-1401, or your staff may contact Jackie Guevarra at (213) 974-1361 or jguevarra@bos.lacounty.gov.

CZ:JG:LL:JKB:JTG

c: Fesia Davenport, Acting Chief Executive Officer
Joseph M. Nicchitta, Acting Chief Deputy
Rafael Carbajal, Acting Director, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Selwyn Hollins, Director, Internal Services Department
Jacki Bacharach, Chair, Quality and Productivity Commission
Ed Munoz, Chair, Citizens' Economy & Efficiency Commission
Edward Eng, Executive Director, Citizens' Economy & Efficiency Commission
Kerry Doi, Chair, Small Business Commission
Department Heads
Board Liaisons

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY ROADMAP TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY BOARD MOTION
(APRIL 28, 2020, AGENDA ITEM 20) – PROSPER LA QUARTERLY REPORT
(SEPTEMBER 30, 2020)**

**Prosper LA Ideas by Idea Category
(Attachment 1)**

This summary represents approximately 79% (67) of the 85 ideas submitted. These ideas included either adequate descriptions of the problems/issues and proposed a solution or provided enough information to be referred to a County department for further review, evaluation and consideration. The remaining 21% were unrelated to the topic areas (e.g., compliance with Brown Act), directed to non-County agencies (e.g., Department of Motor Vehicles, City of Los Angeles, etc.), general comments about reopening schools and the economy, or were incomplete or lacked substance. For more information, please contact us at idea@prosperla.lacounty.gov.

Category: Business Assistance (14)	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
The grant/loan process is not timely. Business owner applied for a grant and received a loan.	Communicate with the business owner timely and notify them of the status change.
The business assistance program is under different County departments.	Centralize business assistance programs and utilize community stakeholder groups to disperse business assistance resources.
Demand for inspections become overwhelming as businesses reopen.	Allow a volunteer group of residents to conduct a pre-inspection of restaurants, bars, etc. and make suggestions to help businesses comply with inspection requirements.
Promote buying at locally owned business. Create a loyalty program to support locally owned businesses	Create a County Credit Card in conjunction with a major credit card operator. Card users earn points when shop at designated businesses in the County. Points can be redeemed for tickets to museums, County fees, etc.
Small businesses need assistance in starting a new business	Assign a business "case worker", advisor/consultant, or "business buddy" to help small business navigate the various phases of starting a business.
Businesses need assistance to recover the economy.	Offer advertising grants to small and medium sized businesses; allow the use of sidewalks for dining; develop a scheduling app to connect consumers to small businesses, expand coverage of the Los Angeles Regional COVID-19 Recovery fund; create a program to fund Teaching Assistants to help teachers
Lack of high-quality supermarkets in low-income communities.	Invest in FreshWorks or a similar healthy food financing program to incentivize high-quality stores to locate and expand in South and East Los Angeles County.
Category: Cost Savings (34)	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Use technology to preserve the poll workers and voters' safety against COVID-19.	Use technology designed to increase the efficiency of the absentee ballot signature verification process with automation.

Help employees retire faster to save money.	Offer early retirement incentives/packages, as well as voluntary furlough to save money
Access to school records will save social workers time.	Allow social workers to access medical records and school databases instead of faxing requests. This will save time and allow social workers to focus more on child safety.
Consider use of Proposition HHH funds. Re-evaluate cost for already approved projects.	Consider a new demonstration project which builds more affordable housing
Help schools recover from Covid-19. Provide teaching assistants to help the teachers with the class.	Create a program to Fund Teaching Assistants for next few years.
Current firefighting equipment has limited range and offer no protection in violent situations (e.g., riots).	Use firefighting equipment, especially equipped with armor and uses drones, to fight fires.
Recommendations for telework	Study the "future of work" and structure telework to optimize talents, team structure and work development strategies; extend telework; consider desk sharing; and invest in technology.
Recommendations for County operations	Eliminate the use of transmittals countywide; allow documents to be electronically signed, establish regional administrative headquarters countywide; consolidate major buying opportunities; standardize core administrative processes
Recommendations related to COVID-19	Pay donors for plasma to treat COVID-19 infected patients; deliver COVID-19 tests using drones; create a purchasing team to buy personal protective equipment (PPE); procure PPE with high efficiency air filters; develop a map where infections are spiking weekly; give grant funding to graduate researchers to fabricate PPE using 3-D printers; and install hands-free magnetic entry strip for containment entry for isolation rooms and other areas needing risk mitigation from Covid-19.

Category: Contracting Process (14)

<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Departments are not detecting fraud, theft-related crimes, and waste by County vendors.	Departments should conduct surprise annual performance reviews and audits of the county vendor subject to review.
The RFP process is onerous, overwhelming, and small businesses have difficulty completing bids.	Create a sample bid proposal and streamline the process.
Improve workflow stockroom operations.	Streamline stockroom policies and use electronic forms, which reduces cost.
The County reimburses childcare development centers that are registered and directly pay the childcare provider.	DCFS should determine a way to directly provide benefits and supplements to the resource parents.
The application and vendor registration process is time consuming	Shift to an online portal for submitting contracts and grants; create a cumulative list of certified small businesses; and provide a vendor directory itemized by category.

Revise the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and certain requirements to allow small businesses to compete for bids.	Rework the RFPs to reduce the value of having past experience doing similar work, unbundle large contracts, and lower thresholds and approval levels.
Department Heads should be involved in the contracting process.	Establish a stronger connection between the contracting office and Department Heads.
Category: Other (23)	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Each County Department has administrative functions, such as Public Relations, Human Resources, Contracting and Fiscal Management, that should be the same across departments.	Standardize and consolidate core administrative functions and processes and implement business best practices to reduce duplicate expenses.
Residents do not have real-time knowledge of crowd density around the County.	Develop an app to provide the public with real time crowd density assessments, to allow them to make informed decisions on adhering to social density guidelines.
The County has needs to disseminate messages to all County residents	Implement an employee and partner advocacy platform to collectivize the media access and harness it to distribute life-saving information at greater scale than the County can do on its own.
Recent graduates need field experience.	Provide job-based mentorships in skilled areas that come out of these programs.
Social workers are only required to follow up with a referred family via a phone call.	Require the social worker to conduct a face-to-face contact with the referred family to increase the likelihood of the family accessing their services.
Children Social Workers need an automated tracking system to streamline their heavy workload.	Develop an automated work tracking system that prioritizes work, show deadlines and due dates each week, and create work and monitoring efficiencies.
Miscellaneous recommendations:	-Coordinate exhibit showing off all the ART that was created during the lock-down; establish a County Credit Union; establish community kiosks in high traffic areas; designate space for a community vegetable and fruit garden at a local park; implement a grading system for local restaurants making effort to reduce waste, plastic containers, use local products, and create app for patrons to easily find these restaurants.
Propose a study on anti-germ solution to destroy germs, including COVID-19. Determine if the anti-germ mouthwash reduces illness and infections.	Large scale rollout of anti-germ solution during the flu season can lead to less or avoidance of hospitalization.

Recommendations on homelessness	Provide the homeless community with options to relocate to other cities/states where cost of living is lower; Buy land and create a "Garden of Eden", which gives homeless people an address and participate in growing their own food; Use rental space vacated by telework for housing; and create an Antelope Valley Continuum of Care - the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster should be separated from LAHSA to better address homelessness.
There is a digital divide in communities and certain communities that lack basic internet.	Leverage the County's Cisco wireless infrastructure deployed at Libraries and County buildings and extend connectivity to communities.