



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Los Angeles County and Mayor Eric Garcetti Announce Results of First-Ever Transition Strategy for Oil Extraction Workers

LOS ANGELES – The County of Los Angeles and Mayor Eric Garcetti today welcomed the release of the Just Transition Strategy – a first-ever framework for creating a pathway for workers in oil drilling to find new employment as the City and County begin phasing out oil extraction in Los Angeles.

The Board of Supervisors approved its ordinance to ban new oil drilling and phase out existing oil extraction in unincorporated Los Angeles on November 4, 2022. In February, Garcetti signed a directive to phase out oil and gas drilling in the City of Los Angeles, and last week, the City Council voted to phase out all oil drilling in L.A. and ban new wells. Garcetti is set to sign the ordinance later today.

As part of the work to advance policies to phase out oil drilling, the City and County created the Just Transition Task Force, which is made up of stakeholders from labor groups, Tribal Nations, the oil industry, academic institutions, and state and local government entities, as well as environmental justice leaders and workforce development experts. The Task Force convened more than two dozen times in 2021 and 2022 to develop recommendations to:

- Provide oil extraction workers impacted by phase-out policies with the necessary support to transition their skills into jobs of comparable, family-sustaining compensation or retirement in ways that promote livelihoods and dignity.
- Properly remediate closed oil well sites and integrate input from frontline communities and sovereign Native Nations, on whose ancestral homelands Los Angeles is built, in community visioning, remediation and land use redevelopment planning processes; and
- Leverage public and private funds to equitably and sustainably finance and coordinate the successful implementation of the Just Transition Strategy.

The recommendations include 19 specific strategies to achieve these goals, including the creation of a Workers Advisory Council to gather input and feedback from oil workers during the phase-out and solutions to ensure robust community participation in future land reuse planning. The full set of recommendations can be found [here](#).

The Task Force was facilitated by the Just Transition Fund, a philanthropic hybrid that provides technical assistance and grants to transitioning energy communities. The City and County worked with Intelligent Partnerships to determine that there are 664 oil extraction workers in the city and unincorporated L.A. County. Intelligent Partnerships conducted on-the-ground employee outreach across four large oil production sites in the City and County, during which over 60 percent of oil workers surveyed indicated that green energy was their first choice for re-employment. Intelligent Partnerships identified industries with job opportunities that offer wage parity and skill alignment—and up to \$620 million dollars in state and federal funds available to support oil extraction worker transitions.

The Task Force will continue meeting quarterly to advise, guide, and support the County and City in the implementation of its recommendations.

“The LA Just Transition Task Force is a national model for tangibly putting people first while phasing out fossil fuel extraction. The Just Transition Strategy released today demonstrates that L.A. brings the same level of ambition to elevating and supporting workers as we do to phasing out fossil fuel extraction. This strategy proves that an environmental win for the communities most impacted is also a win for workers,” said Holly J. Mitchell, Supervisor to the Second District.

“Oil drilling has always been a part of L.A.’s history, but today, we’re creating a new legacy for Los Angeles,” said Garcetti. “The Just Transition Task Force is a recognition of our responsibility to support the workers who will feel the impact of this transition the most — and show the world how we can turn this environmental imperative into an economic opportunity and build the green and just future our children and grandchildren deserve.”

“The era of trading our clean air, water, and soil for fuel must end. But we don’t have to choose between our environment and good jobs – we can and will have both. This strategy is going to help light our path toward environmental justice for all communities, all while preserving and expanding economic opportunity,” said Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Janice Hahn, Supervisor to the Fourth District. “The Task Force brought together stakeholders from a big cross-section of the city and county. It’s clear that while challenges are shared by all, so is our drive to find solutions.”

“The Just Transition Strategy reflects many of my priorities for environmental justice and worker protections,” said Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor to the First District. “I’ve spent much of my public service career focused on uplifting workers, and at the same time, empowering communities bearing a disproportionate burden from heavy industry. I applaud the cooperation between all the various stakeholders and look forward to supporting the Strategy’s implementation.”

“Our County’s oil extraction workers are a critical part of the industry’s workforce, our communities, and our regional economy,” said Kathryn Barger, Supervisor to the Fifth District. “The work we’ve done to attract employers to L.A. in sectors like zero emissions transportation manufacturing is an important investment that I fully support. The Just Transition Strategy report shows that we can transition workers into those kinds of careers with dignity. It’s a thoughtful plan, developed by critical stakeholders, which gives me confidence that we are on a path where our sustainable future has a place for all of our workers. Although change can be difficult, every transition is an opportunity to ensure that we are advancing our goals of protecting our environment, our communities, and our workforce.”

Background

There are roughly 2,930 active and idle oil wells throughout the City of Los Angeles and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, including in residential neighborhoods, near community parks and schools. The Wilmington and Inglewood oil fields make up more than half of the oil production in LA; in 2018, those two oil fields alone produced 6,506,000 barrels of oil.

The city and the County jointly incorporated goals to phase out oil and gas operations in their respective sustainability plans published in 2019. The Our County Sustainability Plan set forth a goal of a fossil fuel free Los Angeles by 2045. The City of L.A.'s Green New Deal similarly seeks to dramatically reduce exposure to health-harming pollutants in disadvantaged communities, directing the city to coordinate with L.A. County to develop a sunset strategy for oil and gas production operations countywide.

Additional Commentary

“We know from our years of work at the Just Transition Fund that the best way to drive successful outcomes is to plan early and ensure that those most affected by local challenges have a seat at the table helping to craft solutions. Our facilitation of an unprecedented and diverse Task Force composed of key stakeholders was essential to making tangible, achievable recommendations to The City and County of Los Angeles. We are proud that our work will provide impacted oil extraction workers with the necessary support to retrain for new jobs, properly remediate shuttered oil well sites, and leverage public and private funds to equitably finance and help coordinate a just transition.” – **Heidi Binko, Executive Director, Just Transition Fund (Task Force Facilitation Lead and Just Transition Expert)**

“The skilled men and women of the LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council need places to work that are family-sustaining jobs. I appreciated that the County and City elevated labor in the discussion on the future of jobs in the County of Los Angeles.” – **Chris Hannan, Executive Secretary, LA/OC Building & Construction Trades Council (Workers Subgroup Co-Lead)**

“The Task Force has been committed to developing strategies that are holistic, innovative, and build opportunities for using cutting edge technology and ecologically innovative solutions for site remediation.” – **Marcela Oliva, Professor, Los Angeles Trade Technical College (Workers Subgroup Co-Lead)**

“Frontline communities have suffered disproportionately from LA's oil extraction, and we now have a clear pathway to end this burden. This Task Force has been focused on outlining a just approach for re-envisioning former oil extraction sites towards creating community beneficial spaces. This collaboration and these strategies speak to LA's commitment to do right by both oil workers and these vulnerable and deserving communities.” – **Bahram Fazeli, Director of Research and Policy Communities for a Better Environment; Co-Chair, STAND LA (Site Remediation and Reuse Subgroup Co-Lead)**

“In the philanthropic world, there is rapidly growing interest in the concept of Just Transition. But most of the conversation has been at the ‘50,000-foot level.’ The LA County-LA City Just Transition Taskforce has made a huge step in moving this discussion to a practical level, mapping out specific strategies and actions to realize the vision of a renewable energy economy that protects and supports workers, while remediating and reusing land for the benefit of adjacent communities and native nations.” – **Michele Prichard, Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives, Liberty Hill Foundation (Finance Subgroup Co-Lead)**

“It was a pleasure to be involved in the necessary work the Task Force set out to do. It is rare that best intentions and best practices meet up, but this has definitely been the case for the work the Just Transition Task Force undertook. I feel confident what we have accomplished will help those in Los Angeles City and Los Angeles County as intended and serve as a template for others.” – **Norman Rogers, 2nd Vice President, USW Local 675 (Finance Subgroup Co-Lead)**

“I am grateful for the year-long collaboration with diverse stakeholders to advance a just transition and the cleanup of polluting oil wells in our backyards. These recommendations will move forward our collective vision to support oil workers, frontline and Tribal communities, and our environment as Los Angeles phases out fossil fuel production.” – **Monica Embrey, Senior Associate Director, Sierra Club**

“The devil will be in the implementation, but I think we have created a strong template for deep community engagement that will help us transition away from oil as smoothly and equitably as possible.” – **Lisa Hart, Board Member, Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance**

“I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to participate in these task force meetings and want to uplift the integration of the voices of Native Nations whose unceded ancestral homelands are within the city and county of LA. It is extremely important for indigenous ideas to be integrated in the process of remediating the land.” – **Gabriella Lassos, Gabrielino-Tongva, Indigenous Youth Environmental Justice Program Director, Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples**

“We can only answer the question – what is just transition? – by taking action with results. With the transition to phase out oil production in LA County and City already underway, the task at hand is to make this transition just. I'm honored to be a part of the LA County-City Just Transition Task Force to demonstrate a proof of concept. This is a chance to move toward action to support people who will lose jobs, and plan for a future that repairs harms from polluting industries. A chance to transition us closer to a pro-people and pro-climate LA.” – **Veronica Wilson, California Organizer, Labor Network for Sustainability**

“Intelligent Partnerships is honored to be a partner in the L.A. City-County Just Transition; as they endeavor to phase out oil extraction in a way that centers the future and wellbeing of oil workers, labor, industry and the communities they serve. By being inclusive, intentional and courageous in their approach, they are laying the groundwork as leaders and giving us a blueprint to a brighter future.” – **Daniel Villao, CEO, Intelligent Partnerships (Research Consultant)**

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