

EXECUTIVE OFFICE



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CELIA ZAVALA  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE**  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 383  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  
(213) 974-1411 • www.bos.lacounty.gov

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS

HOLLY J. MITCHELL

SHEILA KUEHL

JANICE HAHN

KATHRYN BARGER

January 13, 2021

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

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 (DECEMBER 31, 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.

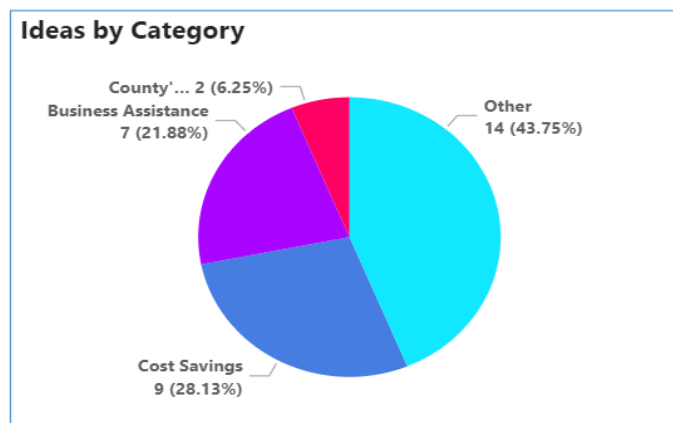
These directives are part of a comprehensive countywide effort, inclusive of partnerships with the community, businesses, and nonprofits, to identify actionable ideas to spur economic recovery.

The following are the updates on our efforts since we issued our quarterly report as of September 30, 2020:

### **PROSPER LA IDEAS**

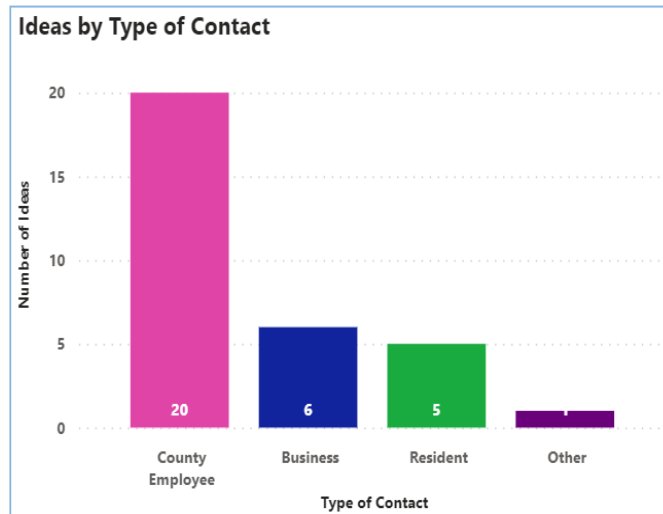
The Board motion directed the working group to promote innovative and thoughtful ideas from County department staff, businesses, and the public to streamline contracting, assist businesses, and identify potential cost-savings actions that could be taken by each department. This effort is part of the County's roadmap to economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As previously reported, the Prosper LA working group developed a public-facing website (<https://prosperla.lacounty.gov/>) that invites the public, County employees and other interested stakeholders to submit ideas on various County practices. We created the idea intake form to address these specific topics and categories.

During the period covered in this report from September 1 and November 30, 2020, we received 32 ideas from both the County workforce and the general public, categorized as follows: contracting process (2), business assistance (7), cost savings (9), and other (14).



*Table 1: Ideas by Category for reporting period September 1 through November 30, 2020. Approximately 44% (14) of the ideas were categorized as Other (e.g., use of high-resolution cameras and artificial intelligence, place inspectors in field offices, etc.)*

The idea creators identified themselves as County employees (20), businesses (6), residents (5), and two identified as other.



*Table 2: Ideas by Type of Contact for reporting period September 1 through November 30, 2020. The majority of the respondents (63%) were County employees.*

The majority of the ideas (75%) 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, 25% were incomplete, lacked substance, and/or were unrelated to the topic areas (e.g., global warming, offer of training/education opportunities, available artwork for sale, etc.)

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

### **Cost Savings**

- Provide only one computer (desktop or laptop) to County employees.
- Proposal to address LED lighting replacement bulbs (e.g., how to protect grounding connections from corrosion/disconnect)
- Hire an actuarial firm to work with the Fire/Forestry Department to analyze and mitigate the cost of fires

### **Contracting Process**

- Address implicit bias in county contracting, including narrowly defined proposers' minimum requirements.
- County Contractor's business hours should match County departments operating hours.

### **Business Assistance**

- Produce a YouTube tutorial on how to complete or apply for small business benefits.
- Create a dashboard on the LA Business Portal that easily walks entrepreneurs through how to start a business in the County.
- Introduce a web-based app that shows which businesses have safely reopened.

### Other

- Send inspectors out in the field to review/approve plans and issue permits instead of contractors going to a central County facility.
- Use of technology (e.g., high resolution cameras, artificial intelligence, etc.) to identify criminal suspects, including those involved in the Compton Blue Line Train Station shooting of Sheriff Deputies
- Propose changes to County administrative/personnel matters (e.g., allow employees to purchase additional service credit, carryover of annual leave benefits, etc.)

Several ideas have either been implemented (e.g., use of sidewalks for dining, providing financial assistance to businesses, etc.), relate to ongoing efforts by County departments (e.g., implicit bias training, housing for homeless), or general comments on reopening businesses and the economy.

In addition to tracking data by category and type of contact, we are also monitoring responses by location. The 32 ideas originated from thirteen locations identified by zip code. Of the 32 ideas, 17 (53%) originated from within the City of Los Angeles and 3 were from other counties (i.e., County of Orange, San Diego and Santa Barbara). The top contributing cities are listed below.

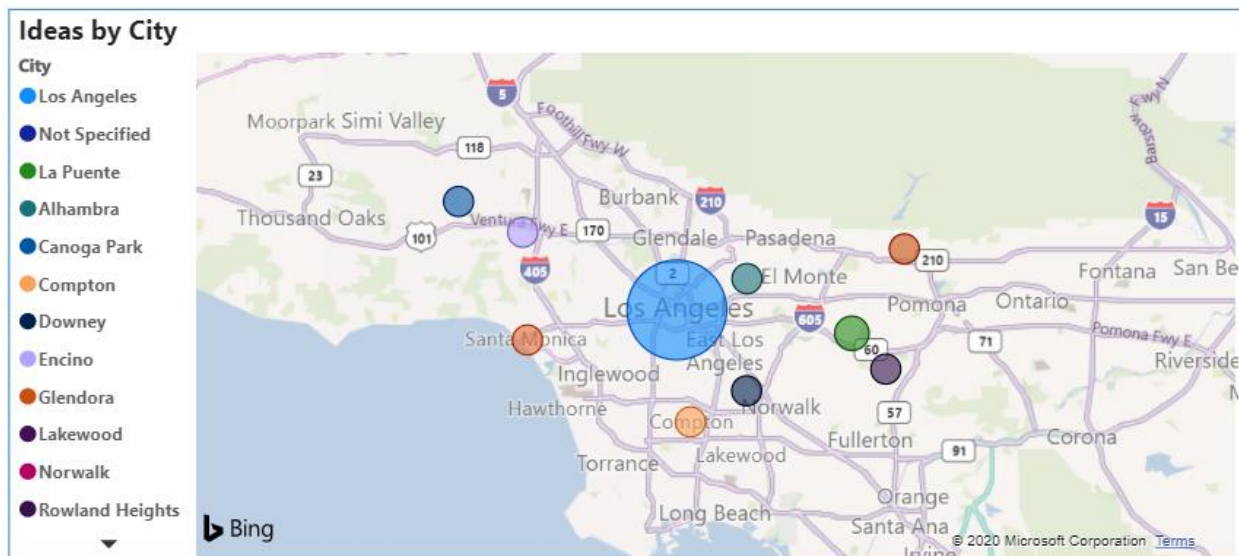


Table 3: Ideas are tracked geographically by zip code (if specified). Ideas originated from approximately 12 identifiable cities/areas within and 3 from outside of the County.

### DEPARTMENT RESPONSES TO PROSPER LA IDEAS

On September 18, 2020, we informed County Department Heads, Board Liaisons and/or designated department staff of the ideas received through the Prosper LA website (<https://prosperla.lacounty.gov/>). We asked departments to review and evaluate the ideas for feasibility, cost effectiveness and the potential for implementation. Of the 89 ideas included in our last report, we forwarded 85 (96%) ideas to County departments for

further review and evaluation. As of November 30, 2020, we received a response on 72 ideas from 14 departments and will continue to follow up with the departments for responses on the remaining 13 ideas. Of the 72 ideas, departments indicated that they have either implemented the ideas or programs were already in place for 37 (52%) ideas, while another 6 (8%) ideas were undergoing further consideration for implementation and 5 (7%) ideas are being referred to other departments.

After detailed analysis and cost studies, departments also identified 24 (33%) ideas that were determined to be not feasible, as follows:

- Pay donors for their convalescent plasma – Convalescent Plasma Benefit Optimizer has shown no benefit in clinical trials, nor effective for managing and preventing disease
- Post Covid-19 victims' names/photos on a map – The Social Distancing Project would release the identification of a Covid-19 patient, which violates confidentiality and privacy requirements
- The Department of Children and Family Services should eliminate the use of transmittals – Even though the elimination of transmittals is cost effective, the Department of Human Resources use the transmittals for tracking and auditing purposes, helps with prioritization, and provides a quick overview
- Fund graduate research students to produce/fabricate personal protective equipment (PPE) – There has been a significant increase in PPE production, so it is not cost effective to fund to a graduate program to produce PPEs
- Halt Proposition HHH projects and consider an alternative housing demonstration project – Proposition HHH funding is under the jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles
- Offer early retirement packages – Early retirement incentives were contemplated and deemed not cost effective
- Allow employees to voluntarily furlough – Use of voluntary unpaid days off was considered when planning for mandatory layoffs, but layoffs were alleviated
- Develop the hybrid firefighting equipment dubbed the Special Applications Firefighting Equipment (SAFE) – The armor fitted SAFE currently does not exist and will be costly to develop
- Offer a Horsemastership/Course Design apprenticeship – This apprenticeship is not a high growth employment activity like healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and the other high-growth sectors designated by the Board

General comments provided by departments on the feasibility of other ideas include insufficient information was provided to determine cost effectiveness, and submission does not provide a solution for a project, only comments and concerns. We will continue to provide the Board with departmental updates to ensure the ideas received through the Prosper LA website are adequately vetted.

**INTERNAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS ON COUNTY PROCUREMENT PROCESSES**

The working group originally reached out to the Internal Services Department (ISD) in May 2020 for guidance and feedback on developing the Prosper LA website. ISD served as the subject matter expert on the County's contracting process, one of the focus areas of Prosper LA. In addition to the ideas received through the website, ISD identified internal procurement challenges that impact cycle times, affect user experience, and hinder transparency and business integrity. These challenges include decentralized processes, inconsistent procedures/protocols, and inefficiencies (e.g., paper intensive process). Details of these problems/issues and the proposed solutions are summarized in Attachment 1 of this report.

The proposed solutions are incorporated in ISD's report back to the Board in response to a September 29, 2020 Board motion that directed the County to review and provide recommendation on digital and streamlined contracting and auditing activities. The Digital and Streamlined Contracting and Auditing for Los Angeles County report was recently issued on November 25, 2020 (Attachment II). The report includes recommendations to:

- 1) Improve and streamline contracting and auditing, including strategies to move these processes to standardized, cloud-based processes to reduce duplicative work for our contractors and County staff which would both ensure transparency and save money, and
- 2) Use available technology to move towards eliminating the current paper-based system and create a centralized website (such as a one-stop shop website)

As indicated in the attached Board Letter from ISD (Attachment II), the Department has taken steps to implement specific recommendations contained in the report. For example, ISD has piloted the streamlined forms in various solicitations and based on the reduction of time and cost to the vendors and departments, these revisions will be presented to the Audit Committee for approval by March 2021 and will be incorporated into an automated system. We thank ISD for their participation in the Prosper LA working group and offer our support and feedback, as needed.

### **PROSPER LA PROMOTION**

The working group continues to promote the Prosper LA website and encourage residents, County employees, business owners and the general public to submit ideas through the website. Since we issued our last report, the QPC discussed Prosper LA at its biennial Department Visits and requested Department Heads to notify their workforce of the website, social media toolkits were sent to County public information officers, information ideas were shared with Board liaisons, and the DCBA sent out a notice to various chambers of commerce, worker agencies and Business Improvement Districts to ensure optimal reach.

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 continued active participation on the County's recovery efforts.

Additional information on these ideas is available upon request. Please send your inquiries to [idea@prosperla.lacounty.gov](mailto: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](mailto:jguevarra@bos.lacounty.gov).

CZ:JTG

c: Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer  
Rafael Carbajal, 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  
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  
(DECEMBER 31, 2020)**

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

This summary represents approximately 75% (24) of the 32 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 25% were unrelated to the topic areas (e.g., global warming, available artwork for sale, etc.), directed to non-County agencies (e.g., Metro), or were incomplete or lacked substance. For more information, please contact us at [idea@prosperla.lacounty.gov](mailto:idea@prosperla.lacounty.gov).

<b>Category: Business Assistance (6)</b>	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Many businesses are struggling due to Covid-19 and not getting the assistance they need (loans/grants) due to lack of technical assistance needed to complete the required forms or obtaining required supporting documents.	County departments produce a YouTube tutorial (or other popular platform) on how to complete or apply for the benefits that small businesses need (e.g., YouTube "211" channel to walk thru many worthwhile program for businesses/participants.)
Indoor playground business has been closed since March 2020 and needs financial assistance.	Provide grants specifically for businesses such as indoor playgrounds
The Los Angeles Department of Public Health has not allowed small businesses to operate for 11 consecutive weeks.	Modify the health order to allow indoor malls to operate at 25%, as allowed under the current Purple Tier.
Fear of exposure to the COVID-19 virus lead to a decline in community engagement, a decrease in business patrons, and a reduction in revenue needed to sustain the County's economy.	Introduce a web-based app that can serve as an online hub for County residents. The app would allow for community engagement and create a sense of unity and morale within the County. The app can show which businesses have safely re-opened, provide an "augmented reality view" of businesses like restaurants and address the fear of going out in public spaces.
The process of starting a business in the County is tedious and steps are difficult to navigate.	Convert the LA Business Portal into a functioning business portal. Create a dashboard that easily walks entrepreneurs through each step of starting a business in the County. Local software companies could partner with the County to create the new "LA entrepreneur experience."
Restaurants have taken a financial hit during the Covid-19 pandemic. Restaurants serve as an anchor to local businesses in a neighborhood. Dollars spent in local restaurants lead to dollars spent in nearby businesses.	Encourage restaurants to put a few tables on the sidewalk for outdoor dining.



<b>Category: Cost Savings (6)</b>	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Many County employees are issued both a desktop and a laptop computer. This is a waste of County funds.	Department should provide one computer per employee unless there is a unique, compelling, and documented business need.
The three areas of concern for forest fires are loss of life, pollutants contaminating the environment, and tremendous financial costs.	Hire an actuarial firm to work with the Fire/Forestry Department to analyze the forests and provide reports that enable decision makers to best direct funds to mitigate the problem.
LED lighting burns out quickly, costing the County millions in replacement bulbs and maintenance. Stray voltage or excess voltage is the number one problem causing bulbs to burn out. Stray voltage or excess voltage is caused primarily by poor grounding.	Protect grounding connections from corrosion and disconnect. The Strong Cap is a 3 in 1 solution eliminating corrosion and disconnect from the weakest part of the circuit grounding connection.
Reduce the need for the peaker power plants that are expensive to operate and add unnecessary pollution into the air.	Identify the top 5% of County buildings that use the most electricity per square foot. The buildings can be retrofitted with electrical battery storage on their rooftops. A computer will tap into the electricity grid at night, store energy, and redirect it where needed during the day.
Errors in policing escalate violence between police and citizens.	Utilize Pareto charts, which are used by six sigma experts, as a tool to identify types of errors that occur and to quantify each type of error. Community leaders and law enforcement review substantiated police violence and identify the types of errors the citizens and law enforcement made, respectively, that caused the escalation that led to violence. Provide necessary training to address the errors.
Reduce civilian casualties during vehicle pursuits by using caches of undercover vehicles.	Use undercover vehicles during a pursuit. The goal is to reduce speed and any resulting injuries.
<b>Category: Contracting Process (2)</b>	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Systemic and institutional racism exist in the County's contracting process.	Address implicit bias in the African American community by providing training; provide technical assistance to African American agencies in obtaining funds; and end the practice requiring a narrowly defined "Proposer's Minimum Mandatory Requirements' in the Request for Proposal, which disqualifies existing community based organizations.
County Department operating hours do not match contract staff working hours.	Contract staff service hours should align with County Department operating hours

<b>Category: Other (10)</b>	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Contractors must go to a County facility to have plans approved for permits to be issued and fees paid. This results in long wait times and lost travel time.	Send inspectors out into the field (e.g., library, community hall, school auditorium, church parking lot, County field office, etc.) where contractors can conduct business without the wait and lost travel time. Inspectors can visit various areas on different days.
A change in personnel/administrative matters can save the County money	These two administrative actions that can save or generate money for the County: 1) allow County staff to purchase additional five (5) Years of Service Credit and 2) allow employees to carry over Elective Leave Hours up to 160 hours to the next year instead of reimbursing them this year.
The County has one of the largest homeless populations. Although, there is Measure H funding, there is no improvement when it comes to this vulnerable population. The County needs to have more measurable outcomes and identify a more permanent solution.	The State and County governments have a lot of land at their disposal. For example, State recently discarded land from their Youth Correctional facilities. Instead of selling it to a housing developer, the State and County should build public housing for homeless and seniors. These epicenters could also provide support services to rehabilitate and reintroduce at-risk populations for change to become successful.
Residents need help paying their bills.	The County reallocate funds from the budget as emergency pandemic assistance and help people pay their bills. This will result in increased spending at local businesses and services.
Not everyone reads the Board meeting agendas or watches the live broadcast, but many people surf the web. Information on rewards leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of a person(s) responsible for the death of constituent needs to reach a larger segment of the County public.	The County should put reward information on a webpage map of Los Angeles County. The public will visit the web page and see a map of violent crimes, including a brief description of the incident. Not everyone reads the Board meeting agendas or watches the live broadcast, but many people surf the web and need extra cash.
Effectively moving large amounts of packaged food and supplies to the residents that need them.	Identify the top 10 sites for underground warehouses close to the freeways in the County. Underground warehouses have the following benefits: utility savings of up to 70%, cheaper per square foot than standard warehouses, higher worker productivity due to cooler environments, consumers buy more when offered same day delivery, and land above warehouses can be made into beautiful parks
Identification of suspects at the Compton Blue Line train station where two Sheriff's Deputies were attacked and people on the County's Most Wanted list.	Use of technology (e.g., gait recognition, high resolution cameras, artificial intelligence, partner with Department of Motor Vehicle, etc.) to identify a suspect.

**Internal Services Department**

In addition to the ideas received from the Prosper LA website (<https://prosperla.lacounty.gov/>) and summarized above, the Internal Services Department (ISD) submitted ideas related to streamlining the County's contracting process. These ideas were also presented to the Board on November 25, 2020. See Attachment II for additional details and recommendations. These contracting-related ideas are summarized, as follows:

<b>Internal Services Department Contracting Process (2)</b>	
<i>Problem/Issue</i>	<i>Solution</i>
<p>The County’s contracting process is completely decentralized and confusing for departments, contractors, vendors, nonprofit partners, and other stakeholders. The lack of consistent requirements and protocols wastes time, hinders competition and diversity, and inhibits innovation.</p>	<p>The Board can authorize an entity to oversee and guide the contracting process over both services and commodities (e.g., via a center-led approach). Similar to ISD’s delegated authority as the Purchasing Agent over commodities for the County, the Board should designate a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) to oversee service contracting. Ideally, this CPO would oversee both services and commodities and develop a set of consistent and applicable rules for all procurement scenarios countywide. Departments would continue to be business owners and subject matter experts for the types of contracts that are required for their services and business needs. However, the CPO would be responsible for rules, guidance, data reporting, and oversight.</p>
<p>The procurement process, which includes ideation/brainstorming, request, solicitation, proposal submission, evaluation, award, contract/budget negotiation, contract execution, contract/budget management, contract monitoring, invoicing, payment, and vendor management, in general and especially for service contract are overwhelmingly paper-intensive and inefficient.</p> <p>The County’s standard procedure for accepting responses to solicitations is through a hard copy, paper-based process. This is similar for contract development, monitoring, invoicing, payment, and vendor management.</p> <p>While Board Policy Chapter 5 – <i>Contracting and Purchasing</i> establishes protocols, including method of payment, reporting requirements, contract monitoring, and approval authority for services contracts, it was developed in compliance with statute and in response to specific circumstances and does not reflect current best practices or more recent technological developments. The existing process is inefficient, slow, and confusing to many vendors competing for County business.</p>	<p>The County procure and implement a new end-to-end procurement solution to enable best in class business processes as well as allow for web-based transactions for all procurement tasks and transactions. A new, standardized, user-friendly e-procurement system will allow for a clear, simple, consistent, standardized, and transparent process for departments, businesses, oversights (e.g., the Board, CEO, etc.), and the public.</p> <p>The proposed solution would require the requisite investment of funds and staff resources to ensure successful deployment and must be paired with the governance, authority, and business process improvements identified above.</p>



County of Los Angeles  
**INTERNAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

1100 North Eastern Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90063

**SELWYN HOLLINS**  
Director

*"Trusted Partner and Provider of Choice"*

Telephone: (323) 267-2101  
FAX: (323) 264-7135

November 25, 2020

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

From:

Selwyn Hollins  
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Selwyn Hollins".

**REPORT BACK ON DIGITAL AND STREAMLINED CONTRACTING AND AUDITING  
FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY (ITEM NO. 20, AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2020)**

On September 29, 2020, the County of Los Angeles (County) Board of Supervisors adopted a motion that directed the County to review and provide recommendations on several digital and streamlined contracting and auditing activities. This report addresses the specific direction to the Director of the Internal Services Department (ISD) to report back, in writing, in 60 days on recommendations to:

- 1) Improve and streamline contracting and auditing, including strategies to move these processes to standardized, cloud-based processes to reduce duplicative work for our contractors and County staff which would both ensure transparency and save money in these austere times. These recommendations should consider:
  - a) Centralized auditing capability to replace auditors in each county department, at times auditing the same contractor on similar contracts; and
- 2) Using available technology to move towards eliminating the current paper-based system. Create a centralized website for consumers to apply for County human services benefits and create a parallel centralized technical solution and process for community-based organizations to communicate with County staff on existing County contracts (such as a one-stop shop website), including responding to solicitations and engaging in other contracting functions.

**Background**

The County procures billions of dollars a year in goods and services annually. As the Purchasing Agent for the County, ISD oversees the purchasing of goods on behalf of

County departments and is responsible for policies and procedures for such transactions, which account for approximately twenty percent of the County's overall annual spend. The remaining eighty percent of the County's annual spend is comprised of service contracts, the authority of which are delegated to each department. This federated model has resulted in a fragmented environment for service contracting, with each department developing its own processes and procedures, resulting in challenges, long cycle times, and confusion for both departments and businesses.

In 2018, the Chief Executive Office convened a taskforce comprised of representatives from the Chief Executive Office (CEO), ISD, Auditor-Controller (A-C), County Counsel, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), Department of Human Resources (DHR) and Department of Health Services (DHS) to identify and evaluate potential opportunities to streamline the County contracting process. The taskforce's final report was distributed to the Board in February 2019. Since this time, departments have implemented some process changes, and ISD has taken the lead on Countywide efforts to accomplish the following recommendations:

- 1. Implementing a Digital Submission Process:** The County's standard procedure for accepting proposal/bids is through a hard copy, paper-based process. In its role as the County's Purchasing Agent, ISD leverages the County's ERP platform (eCAPS) procurement module to release and receive bids online. This current technology, while not best in class or the most user friendly, offers an almost immediate opportunity to leverage a paperless process for solicitations. Expansion of the County's ERP platform (eCAPS) is currently underway from purchasing solicitation functionalities to service contract solicitation functionalities. In August 2019, ISD began piloting the acceptance of proposals electronically using the eCAPS procurement module. Under this pilot, ISD has been successful in eliminating the paper-based process and reducing the solicitation cycle time by 30 percent. The Department of Public Health (DPH) and DHS have volunteered to participate in the next phase of the pilot for health and human services solicitations.
- 2. Utilizing Electronic Signatures to Expedite the Signature Process:** Based on a recent survey, 18 departments have implemented cost-effective, online electronic signature solutions for contracting documents. As a result, cycle times for executing contract documents have significantly reduced for the County and vendors.
- 3. Business Process Improvements and Consolidation of Standard Solicitation Forms:** Many County contracting processes are established through Board policies and ordinances. Since 2018, *Board policy 5.100 – Sole Source Contracts*

and *Board policy 5.055 – Service Contract Solicitation Protest* have both been revised and streamlined to yield efficiencies in the contracting process. ISD and County Counsel completed a thorough review and analysis of Board policies, County Codes and implementation guidelines to streamline County solicitation forms. As a result, the number of standard County forms were reduced by more than 60 percent. ISD piloted the streamlined forms in various solicitations and based on the reduction of time and cost to the vendors and departments, these revisions will be presented to the Audit Committee for approval by March 2021 and will be implemented into an automated system described below (Centralized Vendor Information and Certification Application).

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

To further streamline the County's contracting and auditing, ISD engaged with 14 community-based organizations/nonprofit organizations, including the Center for Nonprofit Management, Weingart Foundation, California Community Foundation, Children's Institute, via the Economic Resiliency Task Force: Nonprofit and Philanthropy Workgroup. ISD also collaborated with County departments that contract for human services, including the Departments of Public Social Services, Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services, Probation, Mental Health, Public Health, Health Services and Children and Family Services to better understand the existing methods and platforms accessible to consumers and to identify opportunities for improvement.

In addition, ISD consulted with the CEO and the A-C to solicit their input and suggestions on streamlining opportunities.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Short-Term Improvement Opportunities**

Based on the feedback and collaboration from stakeholders, the following short-term (6 to 12 months) solutions are being recommended:

- 1. Utilizing Existing 211 LA Website:** With regards to the delivery of human services information, the departments are currently using the 211 LA, a website for consumers and organizations to access information about health and human services. Based on feedback from nonprofit organizations and departments, it is recommended that this existing platform be utilized in the interim until the new community information website is developed and implemented by the CEO.

- 2. Developing an Online Centralized Vendor Information and Certification Repository:** Currently, vendors are required to submit numerous hard copy forms with each proposal/bid submission. To address this inefficiency, ISD is in the process of expanding the capabilities of the existing WebVen system to enable vendors to manage content in their vendor profile, standardize solicitation forms and minimize the frequency of applicable vendor certifications. This recommendation would reduce the size of proposals/bids, by eliminating numerous forms as well as reduce the vendor's time in preparing proposals and the County's time reviewing the required vendor certifications. It is anticipated that this recommendation could be completed within the first quarter of 2021.
- 3. Establishing a Health and Human Services Workgroup:** In addition to recommendations 1 and 2 above, ISD and the human service departments will continue to meet with nonprofit organizations who currently contract with the County on a regular basis to ensure collaboration towards mutually beneficial solutions. In parallel, ISD recommends the establishment of a Health and Human Services Workgroup, consisting of the health and human services departments and the community-based organizations, to facilitate this effort, which can be completed as early as December of this year.
- 4. Standardizing and Coordinating Contract Monitoring and Auditing:** Based upon feedback from nonprofit organizations and the health and human services departments, the current departmental contract monitoring and auditing practices would benefit from a reduction in redundancies. For example, when health and human service contractors are audited by the respective County departments, they are required to submit standard documents (e.g., financial statements, single audit reports, cost plans, etc.) with each review. If a contractor has multiple contracts with the County, this process is duplicative and time consuming. In an effort to standardize and coordinate monitoring and auditing activities between departments, it is recommended that a central repository be developed to safely store documents which are uploaded once by the contractor and accessed by departments at any time for auditing purposes. This effort can be implemented and managed by the Health and Human Services Workgroup identified in the above paragraph, with guidance by the A-C as necessary. For further reduction in time and costs, ISD recommends conducting virtual monitoring activities utilizing repository documents rather than onsite reviews unless necessitated by law or circumstance.

## **Long-Term Improvement Opportunities**

Procurement of goods and services, especially human services, in Los Angeles County must be equitable, efficient, responsible, and cost-effective. It must increase the efficiency of operations, reduce costs, and improve communication and visibility while providing accurate, timely and complete information to decision makers at all levels. Additionally, departments must be able to easily collaborate and share information. To attain this objective, the following long-term solutions are being recommended:

- 1. Implementation of a Countywide eProcurement Technology System:** ISD recommends implementation of a modern end-to-end eProcurement system to provide a simpler and streamlined experience. Implementation of a new Countywide contracting and procurement system will transform the way the County does business. The system, along with the parallel business process changes, will streamline the transactions between the County and its vendors, while creating transparency, and retaining the integrity and fairness of the contracting process. The ease and clarity of the process will increase vendor participation with the County. Such a system will also enable the County to increase data collection as it relates to procurements, capture data related to the County's utilization goals, and department-specific data for reporting. This will allow the County to realize cost savings, through strategic decision-making, that can be redirected to vital programs and services and enable the departments to address issues in real-time. As a result, departments will be equipped with centralized and actionable data to allow the County to make decisions that are impactful and consistent.
- 2. Developing a Centralized Community Information Website:** The County is in the process of developing a centralized information exchange website that will redefine how constituents and consumers access/use the services offered and how referrals are made, tracked and service linkages are confirmed. It is anticipated that the existing 211 service utilized by the health and human service departments will be integrated into the County's infrastructure and therefore improve the quality of the service/provider database and enable the County to leverage a common platform for specific populations. The County is currently developing an RFP for a new Information and Referral contract and on creating the Los Angeles County Information Exchange website. These efforts are anticipated to be completed by the first quarter of 2022.
- 3. Establishing Authority, Oversight, and Standardization:** To effectuate the implementation of a Countywide contracting and procurement system, it is recommended that the Board delegate authority to a department or entity to oversee and guide the contracting process. Similar to the way that ISD has been



delegated the authority as the Purchasing Agent for the County, the Board may consider designating a central procurement office (“CPO”) to oversee the contracting efforts. Ideally, this CPO would oversee both services and commodities and develop a set of consistent and applicable guidelines for all procurement/contracting scenarios. Departments would continue to function as subject matter experts and business owners for contracts related to their core mission. However, the CPO would be responsible for policies and procedures, data reporting, and oversight. The CPO model would provide meaningful improvements in consistency, cycle times, transparency, business integrity, and cost avoidance for departments and all County stakeholders. It will also lead departments to collectively implement a standardized procurement process for contracts that can be monitored pursuant to best practices.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (323) 267-2101, via email at [SHollins@isd.lacounty.gov](mailto:SHollins@isd.lacounty.gov), or Christie Carr, of my staff at (323) 267-3101, via email at [CCarr@isd.lacounty.gov](mailto:CCarr@isd.lacounty.gov).

c: Chief Executive Office  
Auditor-Controller  
ISD Board Deputies  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors