

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND CHAIR HILDA SOLIS

March 1, 2016

With approximately ten million residents, the County of Los Angeles is home to more people, by far, than any other county in the United States. Los Angeles County is also the largest employer in California, with over 103,000 employees. Given its sheer size, when the County acts, there are often immediate and significant impacts. This ability to affect outcomes is especially true as it applies to the County's impacts on our environment. It is, therefore, important to have strong and well-implemented sustainability goals and programs to make certain that we are part of the environmental solution, whether we are considering water, climate change, green energy, environmental justice, or the myriad of other issues.

The County of Los Angeles has thirty-seven departments, each of which has the opportunity to incorporate sustainability practices into their work. Several County departments are already engaged and maintain their own robust sustainability groups. For example, the Internal Services Department maintains the County Office of Sustainability, which is responsible for greening the County's facilities, particularly through energy efficiency programs and policies, and running several County-wide

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energy efficiency programs. The Department of Public Works also runs several sustainability programs, which are focused on County capital projects. Similarly, much of the work currently under development by the Department of Regional Planning is focused on incorporating sustainable planning into the County's Planning Code.

In an effort to better coordinate some of this work, last summer the Board of Supervisors amended the Countywide Sustainability Policy (Board of Supervisors Policy No. 3.045) to create a Sustainability Council to cohesively implement the Board's numerous sustainability policies through the development of a County Sustainability Program Framework ("Sustainability Framework"). The Sustainability Council is comprised of those departments most actively engaged in sustainability activities, including Internal Services, Regional Planning, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation. The Council meets monthly, and facilitates implementation of the Board's sustainability directives through collaboration.

In response to a June 30, 2015 Board motion, the Sustainability Council's Leadership Committee drafted a "conceptual" Sustainability Framework, which states that "the purpose of the Sustainability Framework is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the County's environmental sustainability policies and initiatives." The report compiles participating departments' various environmental policies and initiatives, which total over 300. The Sustainability Framework incorporates a degree of accountability by including indicators and metrics to help evaluate various departments' progress toward reaching targets, as well as a proposed dashboard that would make the County's progress toward reaching various sustainability goals accessible by the public. This represents a great start, but, even though the Countywide Sustainability Policy calls for the Sustainability Council to make recommendations on the development

of new policies and programs, in its December 31 report, the Council made clear that it does not see its role as offering proactive policy recommendations. Thus, the Sustainability Framework reflects only the work the County's departments are currently undertaking. Moreover, the Sustainability Council does not have the authority to hold departments accountable for achieving sustainability targets, nor does it have the resources to hire staff dedicated solely to development and implementation of the Sustainability Framework.

Perhaps most importantly, there often is no incentive for departments or CEO to recommend and implement green measures, even if they make good fiscal and environmental sense. For example, the County owns or leases between 2,000 and 4,000 buildings and structures, very few, if any, of which—until recently— included solar panels to help offset electricity costs and green the County's energy mix. It took several board motions before any solar panels were installed on County buildings, and even now, the work is being undertaken as a pilot project, and is limited to no more than sixty properties. Because no independent individual or group with expertise in sustainability matters has the ability to hold the Sustainability Council accountable, success is taking much longer and may be less significant.

As a component of the Chief Executive Officer's Proposed Reorganization of January 28, 2016, it is important that the Board of Supervisors create a Chief Sustainability Officer within the Chief Executive Office to ensure that the County truly becomes more environmentally sustainable and to weave an ethos of environmental sustainability into everything we do as a County. The Chief Sustainability Officer must facilitate the adoption and implementation of a Countywide Sustainability Plan that will incorporate not only the Sustainability Council's Framework, which comprises existing

departmental sustainability goals, but also new, more aggressive sustainability goals, in consultation with departments. Creating a centralized process and document will help to overcome some of the disjointedness and complacency that arguably limits our green progress by organizing all the work that is currently in progress and giving it new energy.

The process of working with department leadership, including the Sustainability Council, is likely to reveal additional ideas and more aggressive goals, while fostering collaboration and enthusiasm, pushing ourselves, as a County, to reach further with our environmental program. A Chief Sustainability Officer must also work closely with department heads, department-specific sustainability directors, and the Internal Services Department to ensure timely implementation of the Countywide Sustainability Plan, and to regularly update the Countywide Sustainability Plan based on new technologies and legislation. Siting the Chief Sustainability Officer within CEO will give the position the authority such a multifaceted, critical role requires, and is consistent with the Countywide Sustainability Policy, which calls for the Sustainability Council to report to CEO. The position shall be open to both County employees and outside applicants, and the position shall be sufficiently well-funded to attract a dynamic environmental leader with significant expertise. Moreover, the Chief Sustainability Officer's budget shall be sufficient to hire staff to assist with implementation.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

Directs the Chief Executive Officer to create a Chief Sustainability Officer unit within the CEO, with reporting responsibilities to the CEO and to the Board of Supervisors. The Chief Sustainability Officer shall have the duties described in this motion and shall have the authority and responsibility to oversee the development,

adoption and regular updates to the Countywide Sustainability Plan, which shall incorporate but not be limited to the work of the Sustainability Council, as described in Board of Supervisors Policy No. 3.045. The Chief Sustainability Officer shall have the authority to coordinate the efforts of County departments and the Sustainability Council to develop the Sustainability Framework, which shall form the basis of a Countywide Sustainability Plan and shall include final and interim goals, metrics, and timelines, as appropriate. The Chief Sustainability Officer, working with department heads and the Sustainability Council, shall prepare an annual report on Countywide and departmental compliance with the Countywide Sustainability Plan, once it is established, and shall serve as the County's point person.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors directs the Chief Executive Officer to submit a report, in 60 days, that details the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Sustainability Officer unit, along with a recommendation on new or transferred County positions and budgetary resources required for the unit and a timeline for expeditiously hiring new staff.

S:KY/Chief Sustainability Officer