



Board of Supes' Take 5: June 14, 2022

Making the PLACE Program Permanent

This week, we passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis expanding the PLACE (Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment) program and laying the groundwork to make it a permanent County Program.

Initially launched in 2018 as a pilot program following a motion Supervisor Solis and I also authored, PLACE creates a pipeline to train and place clients of our County safety net programs in stabilizing, good-paying County jobs. Since then, the program has engaged and found placement for 140 individuals across six departments, helping them to build skills and begin good careers at LA County. In order to continue and build on that success, this motion seeks ongoing funding and cross-departmental collaboration and sets out plans to more than double our placements each year.

Care with Pride: LA County Gender Health Program

Gender-affirming healthcare is lifesaving healthcare, which is why we passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis establishing a Gender Health program at the Department of Health Services.

A U.S. survey of transgender people in 2015 found that 23% of participants shared that they avoided healthcare services, even when needed, because of the fear of mistreatment due to their gender identity. Additionally, of those seeking healthcare services, 33% reported at least one negative experience in the medical setting that they attributed to their gender identity.

This motion will ensure that our County healthcare system is set up to serve these community members in a way that is effective, inclusive, and consistent with national standards of care for transgender and gender nonbinary people.

This motion stands as a message that, while other states cruelly attempt to make gender-affirming care inaccessible and illegal, LA County will always provide care with pride to our LGBTQ+ residents.

Land Bank Pilot

In yet another move to support LA County's affordable housing infrastructure, the Board passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis seeking funding and a concrete plan for a Land Bank Pilot within the County.

While we were updating the LA River Master Plan (more on that below!), one of the primary requests we heard through public comment was to be thoughtful about how that plan may impact the communities surrounding the river, especially those with a large percentage of lower-income renters. Land banking, through which government entities can acquire, redevelop, and manage abandoned properties, can be integrated with our overarching affordable housing strategies, helping us to prevent any displacement of current residents due to gentrification and create new opportunities for affordable housing.

LA River Master Plan

When the possibility of an updated LA River Master Plan was first being considered, I expressed the hope that our LA County communities could come together to reimagine the river as a rich ecological and recreational resource, fostering biodiversity and enhancing the lives of communities all along its 51 mile length.

I'm happy that this plan, which was adopted by the Board on Tuesday, lays out a blueprint for the future of the river. It was developed with the extensive involvement of local communities and is responsive to the many stated needs and aspirations of County residents up and down the river.

Like any inclusive process, no one got everything they wanted, but I believe this plan represents the kind of expansive rethinking that I, and the motion's lead author, Supervisor Solis, had in mind.

To jumpstart implementation, I introduced a companion motion, which passed, to establish an implementation team and guidance to prioritize projects, developed in consultation with community stakeholders and in alignment with the criteria and goals being set as part of our County Infrastructure Initiative and our Climate Resilience Initiative. It asks Public Works to look for opportunities to advance major projects in high-need areas and to identify where we might be able to close gaps and create a regular cadence of public amenities along the length of the Riverway.

Ensuring an Equitable Post-Pandemic Recovery for LA County Immigrants

As LA County crafts programs and services using American Rescue Plan Act funding, we want to ensure we don't leave our immigrant populations behind.

The American Rescue Plan is intended to fuel our economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and our immigrant communities were hit especially hard by the pandemic. Unless we work to address the barriers that immigrants face- linguistic, cultural, and otherwise- to accessing County services, we run the risk of doubling the damage by excluding them in our recovery.

The motion we passed this week, which Supervisors Holly Mitchell and Hilda Solis authored, brings together the Office of Immigrant Affairs, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion initiative to work with the community and advocates to identify opportunities and gaps in our ARPA-funded programs, and fine-tune our outreach strategy.