Testimony of Bill Allen
President & CEO, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Little Hoover Commission Hearing: August 27, 2009

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, an organization dedicated to promoting job growth, economic expansion and preserving the overall global competitiveness of Los Angeles County, I want to thank you for inviting me here today to present at this very important and timely hearing in front of such a distinguished Commission.

I also want to commend the Little Hoover Commission for undertaking the process of assessing the state's overall economic development activities. Unfortunately, publicly-run economic development programs have historically received only very modest support. Many of these programs continue to deliver their services on "shoe string" budgets and manage to survive on the peripheries of disparate agencies and departments. At times, it seems as though economic development has been relegated to being a convenient afterthought – invoked only periodically to deliver a politically-motivated "punch line". Only now, as we collectively experience the demoralizing and damaging impacts of the deepest recession in over six decades, have folks really begun to understand and appreciate the importance of having well-managed, well-coordinated economic development activities – with adequately resourced programs – to mend our state's hemorrhaging economy.

With this as our backdrop, this morning I will speak to the importance of having a statewide strategic plan for economic development with a single agency or department overseeing the process to better coordinate and deliver the state's economic development efforts and address the considerable demand for economic development assistance in California.

As quick background, the LAEDC was founded in 1981 by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and a group of private sector leaders. We are a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation with more than 200 members from business, education and local government committed to a single mission to attract, retain and grow businesses and jobs in the regions of LA County. Since 1996, the LAEDC has helped attract or retain more than 152,000 jobs, providing $7.5 billion in direct economic impact from salaries, and $128 million in annual tax revenue benefit to local governments and education in Los Angeles County.

Whether through our award-winning Business Assistance Program, which offers free assistance to businesses looking to establish or expand operations and which has won a number of awards including the current Grand Prize for Business Retention and Expansion from the International Economic Development Council; our Kyser Center for Economic Research, which provides up-to-date market economics, demographic research and labor force analyses; or our World Trade Center Association subsidiary, using its international connections to help identify new global market opportunities and arrange for foreign direct investments into LA County, the LAEDC has been at the forefront of promoting a strong, growing, diverse, and sustainable economy for Los

Angeles County. Simply put, the LAEDC's only client is the Los Angeles County economy.

Continuing our economic development leadership, the LAEDC has, for the past year, been engaging stakeholders throughout LA County – over 1,000 to date – in a series of public forums to develop, collaborate on, and build support for the "first-ever" comprehensive, consensus strategic plan for economic development in Los Angeles County. The explicit vision is to promote a strong, diverse and sustainable economy in LA County.

For its part, the LAEDC developed a "straw man" strategic plan document founded on inputs that include: a survey of more than 5,000 businesses operating in LA County, a series of focus group meetings with leaders from the industry clusters driving our region's economy, research into the best economic development practices of other counties and cities around the world, and extensive community outreach. The strategic plan, which reflects the distinct needs of the Los Angeles County economy – a $490 billion economy that is larger than the economies of either Taiwan or Hong Kong, identifies five core aspirational goals necessary for economic growth and the creation of more and better jobs. They are: an educated workforce; a business friendly environment; an attractive quality of life; smart land use; and a 21st century infrastructure. Underneath these five goals, we have built a series of 12 objectives – a "twelve-step program" if you will – to strengthen the economy, improve the environment and invigorate communities.

As important as the plan itself is, we believe the consensus nature of the plan's development – and ultimately its implementation – is just as significant. This is truly a grassroots, bottom-up, consensus-driven strategic plan for economic development in LA County. The stakeholders with whom we met and from whom we received input were not merely from business and economic development organizations, but from environmental groups, labor, the education sector, the environmental justice community, faith based organizations, and the public sector. What's more, many of these individuals and groups will ultimately become the "champions" charged with implementing and delivering on the strategies contained within the "four corners" of the plan.

Taking a step back for a moment, it is hard to believe that Los Angeles County – the largest county in the U.S. with more than 10.4 million residents – has never created a strategic plan for economic development. This is especially troubling when one considers the many risks associated with not having a proactive strategic plan for future economic development, including: reduced quality of life, disinvestment, and a degrading economic environment that impairs job growth, business attraction and retention, and depresses overall economic well-being and wealth creation.

Regrettably, LA County has, in fact, realized many of these very serious impacts. While Los Angeles County has some extremely impressive comparative advantages over

other regions, including 15 leading industry clusters, the nation's two largest seaports, three world-class research universities and 112 other college and university campuses, and some of the largest demand markets in the nation, LA County has underperformed in the creation of jobs for its 10.4 million residents over the past 25 years. From 1980 to 2005, the county added more than 2.5 million residents, but only added about 500,000 jobs for them. And this is before the current economic recession. Even more disconcerting, the City of Los Angeles, which makes up 40 percent of the County's population, added approximately one million new residents from 1980 to 2005, but did not create a single net new job for those residents during that time period. In fact, the City of LA actually lost more than 56,000 net jobs during that 25-year time period. This is certainly not sustainable for a region looking to protect its fast shrinking middle class and bridge the ever-widening gap between rich and poor.

Like LA County, California has no strategic plan for economic development. And like LA County, we believe California has been hurt by not having a strategic plan for economic development to guide its decision making. We all appreciate and value the sheer size, tremendous diversity, and global significance of the California economy. With a state GDP of about $1.7 trillion in 2007, the California economy is responsible for about 13 percent of the total U.S. gross domestic product. And as we've all been continually reminded, if California were an independent nation, it would be the seventh or eighth largest economy in the world.

Yet, even with such a huge, diverse economy, our state has fallen short of its full economic capacity and potential. Over the last quarter century, California – again like LA County – has noticeably underperformed in terms of job creation for its 36.8 million residents. From 1980-2008, the state added approximately 8.7 million new residents, but only created about 2.5 million jobs for those residents. What's more, California is forecasted to lose an additional 620,000 jobs in 2009.

We have all witnessed first-hand the severe impacts of California's worsening economy. With an increasing number of businesses closing their doors and more workers losing their jobs, we have seen a precipitous decline in state revenues which has led to steep and abrupt cuts in everything from health care and education to prisons and infrastructure investment. With some of the highest business and personal income taxes, an overly burdensome regulatory environment, and a structurally dysfunctional state government that has recently been in near perpetual budgetary gridlock, California is fast becoming less known for being the center of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, but for having an exceptionally inhospitable climate for businesses. In fact, *Chief Executive* magazine has ranked California dead last in terms of places to do business for the past four years running. And a recent article in the *Economist* might have described California's worsening economic situation best by stating: "high taxes, coupled with intrusive regulation of business and greenery taken to silly extremes, have gradually strangled what was once America's most dynamic state economy."

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With the state's unemployment rate continuing to rise, hitting 11.6 percent in June – its highest level in over 30 years, sustainable economic growth and job creation clearly must be our highest priorities. If the recent events surrounding the state's budget taught us anything, it is that we must get stakeholders to come together, invest and behave according to a shared vision for growing the economic pie and creating jobs essential to generating income and tax revenue needed to avoid the budgetary deficits that have time-and-again continued to plague us. The alternative is to face recurrent budgetary deficits and to continually focus on quick and illusory fixes that merely "kick the can down the road" by relying solely on raising taxes, borrowing short-term, and/or cutting programs to reduce expenditures.

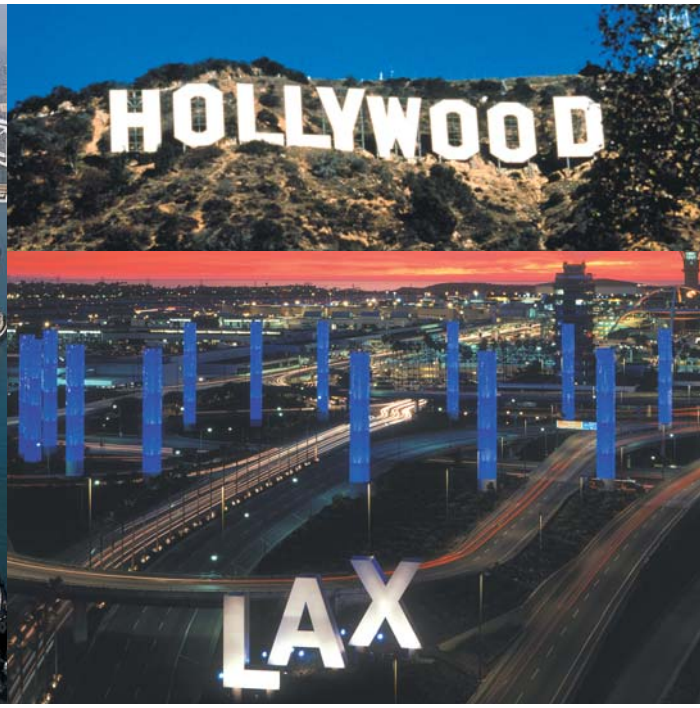
We believe that in such a geographically large state, with such a diverse, global economy and such distinct regional and other interests, it is important for stakeholders from each of the state's economic regions to coalesce and rally around a comprehensive set of shared short- and long-term strategies to stimulate economic recovery and serve as a framework for long-term economic growth essential to stimulate investment, create more and better jobs, and promote equity, the environment and a better quality of life for all Californians.

We also believe that for this strategic planning effort ultimately to be successful – that is, achieve its desired job creation and economic growth outcomes – it must be accompanied by and include clear and relevant measurements of success and performance goals, and be fully supported and adequately resourced under the management of a single state agency or department. In particular, the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency would appear to be the most logical entity to oversee this process since it has already been designated by the state as the lead agency for economic development.

Of course it won't be easy, but now, more than ever, it is important for all of California's regional stakeholders to work together to develop and implement a consensus, comprehensive strategic plan for economic development to inform, guide and catalyze decision-making which is in the best interests of a state aspiring to create jobs and prosperity for all its residents. As we've all seen, the stakes of not to doing so, are just too high.

The LAEDC looks forward to working with this Commission and other stakeholders from California's economic regions to ensure that the state's economic development activities and efforts are achieving their intended and desired goals. Thank you once again for inviting me to address this Commission at this very critical moment in our state's history.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Strategic Plan for Economic Development



ENSURING A STRONG, DIVERSE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY
FOR L.A. COUNTY'S RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES.

2010-2014

MAKING LOS ANGELES MORE COMPETITIVE

Los Angeles County and its 88 cities have underperformed in job creation in recent decades, due in part to the lack of a strategic plan for economic development to guide decision making. There are many risks associated with not having a proactive strategic plan for future economic development, including reduced quality of life, social inequity, disinvestment and a corroding economic environment that undermines job growth, impairs business attraction and retention, and depresses overall economic well-being and wealth creation. In the age of globalization, a strategic plan is an essential guide to long-term regional prosperity. A better connected world will bring greater demands for resources and products and increase location options for companies seeking a competitive advantage. Rapid development will unleash a flood of qualified and educated workers, increasing the need for local workers to attain higher skill levels and improve productivity in order to maintain and improve current living standards. Our response to these competitive pressures must be shaped by a clear, comprehensive, collaborative strategy that guides job and business retention, expansion and attraction. Having good quality, stable jobs is the only path to a stronger, more sustainable economy and a better quality of life for our current and future residents.

A MESSAGE FROM THE L.A. COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Los Angeles County covers over 4,000 square miles and is the nation's most diverse and populous county with more than 10.4 million residents representing more than 220 languages and cultures from around the world. Home to some of the world's leading consumer markets, the largest labor force of any county in the United States, three world-class research universities and 117 other college and university campuses, the two largest seaports in America, and one of the busiest origin and destination airports anywhere, Los Angeles County has one of the world's largest and most dynamic economies with annual economic activity in excess of $500 billion in 2008.

To guide job and business retention, expansion and attraction in this nation-sized economy, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors wholeheartedly endorses this first-ever, ground-up, consensus strategic plan for economic development in Los Angeles County.

The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation facilitated the creation of the plan through a series of public meetings with a diverse array of participants from education, labor, business, government, and the environmental and environmental justice communities. This distinctive group of leaders from regions throughout the County was united in their commitment to a brighter economy, a cleaner environment, and a more broadly shared prosperity.

Now it's time for all of us to come together, carry out and realize what's contained in the "four corners" of this plan. To do so, we need champions to help implement the plan; and, there are roles for everyone in the public, private and non-profit sectors to play. We invite local residents and the best and brightest leaders from the most creative firms from around the world to participate and help us reach our goals.

Gloria Molina
1st District

Mark Ridley-Thomas
2nd District

Zev Yaroslavsky
3rd District

Don Knabe
4th District

Michael D. Antonovich
5th District

INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), a private, non-profit public benefit organization with more than 200 members representing leading private sector employers in the County, two dozen academic institutions, more than 20 cities from across L.A. County, six regional economic development corporations, the County CEO and appointed representatives of all five County Supervisors, identified, assembled and mobilized a diverse group of public, private, business, education, labor, environmental and other community-based participants to shape, build support around and help implement the first-ever comprehensive, consensus strategic plan for economic development in L.A. County.

CONSENSUS STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process was conceived to design and build consensus around the need to implement a comprehensive, collaborative plan for economic development to strengthen the economy, improve the environment and invigorate communities. With generous support from the Morgan Family Foundation, this strategic planning effort differs markedly from other outwardly similar plans in the high level of stakeholder involvement at each step of the process. The animating idea has been to develop consensus around a common vision that serves the community's long-term interests and encourages broad community participation, engagement and ownership to help guarantee the plan's success.

Research began with a survey of more than 5,000 businesses operating in Los Angeles County to determine the health and concerns of industry. Next, we conducted an in-depth study of major industry clusters driving the Los Angeles County economy. This was followed by a series of focus groups with industry leaders to confirm the needs, opportunities and growth potential in key sectors. Then, we surveyed and cataloged best economic development planning practices and strategies among selected U.S. cities and counties, as well as major international cities. From these different research inputs, we identified **five key components** central to economic development success: **Educated Workforce, Business-Friendly Environment, Attractive Quality of Life, Smart Land Use** and **21st Century Infrastructure.** We prepared a "straw-man" document complete with a key aspirational goal for each component, and a series of sample objectives and strategies for meeting each goal.

Public input was a central element of the plan's development. While the "straw-man" document served as a critical starting point, it was during 26 public workshops held across L.A. County that the plan was molded and its consensus vision was developed. We solicited input from 1,070 individual stakeholders (see back cover) representing government, education, business, environment, non-profits, community and labor organizations. Their feedback was used to shape, refine and continuously advance the general plan from an outline to a consensus-driven blueprint for economic development.

Implementation and delivery on the strategies is ultimately what will make this plan dynamic, purposeful and relevant versus one that merely "sits on the shelf." During this phase, we will identify champions to guide implementation of the plan. In particular, the champions will develop an action list of specific implementation tasks, decide on appropriate measurements of success and delineate performance-based timelines. Many of the stakeholders will be drawn from among the participants at the 26 public forums. We also invite the broader public and other key civic stakeholders to join us in committing to implement these strategies in the years ahead to sustain and expand our region's economic prosperity.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY – BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

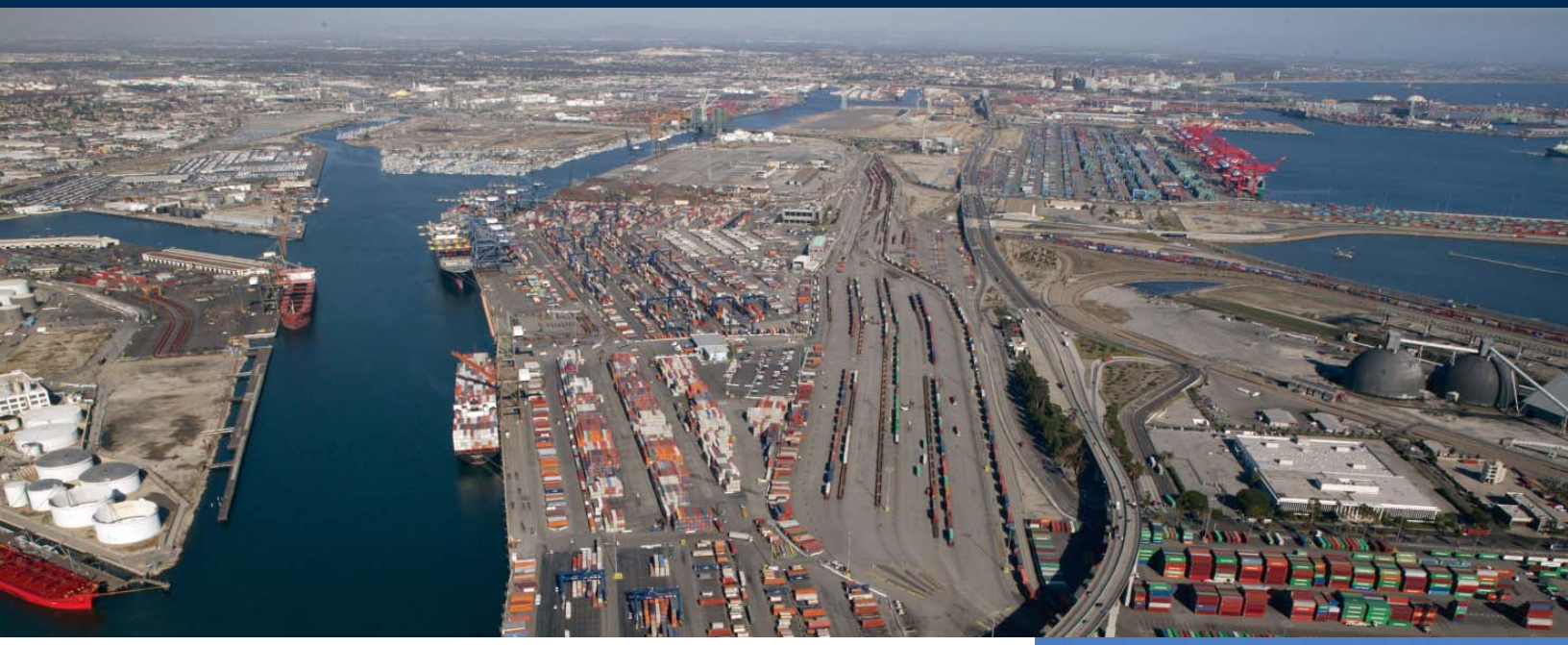
Los Angeles County is made up of 88 vibrant and diverse cities whose population of over 10.4 million would make it the 8th largest state in the United States. As the **entertainment, manufacturing** and **international trade** capital of America, and with over $500 billion in annual economic activity spread across these and other key areas of expertise, L.A. County's gross domestic product is larger than Taiwan or Hong Kong.

L.A. County is most famously known for its entertainment industry. Billions of people around the world enjoy the films, television shows, music and new media created here. Entertainment, in turn, is a major draw for one of the area's primary imports–tourists. Each year, millions of people flock to the County to visit famed studios, enjoy the attractions, relax on one of the region's popular warm water beaches and browse the chic shops along Rodeo Drive and other famous streets in the region.

But there is more to the County than its sunny skies and movie stars. Los Angeles County is also the creative capital of the world and home to 15 dynamic export-oriented industry clusters, ranging from fashion and automotive design to materials and machinery to technology, health services and biomedical. With 120 institutions of higher learning and an abundance of well-educated workers, it should come as no surprise that technology-based businesses are big here, as are engineering, financial, and professional services. The County's major research universities (Caltech, UCLA and USC) have also spawned great growth in the life sciences, engineering and digital technology.

Home to the nation's largest port complex, municipally-owned power utility, and many leading export-oriented industries transitioning to environmental sustainability, L.A. County has also been a leader in advancing environmental innovation, in applying new clean technologies and products to "green" its more established industries such as manufacturing and international trade, and in the creation of green jobs, especially in the areas of renewable energy generation, energy efficiency and green transportation.

As the nation's #1 gateway to the global economy, via the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and Los Angeles



International Airport (LAX), one of the world's busiest origin and destination airports, international trade is the force behind much of the region's vitality. The continuous stream of goods flowing into and out of the region's ports sustains other key segments including warehousing and logistics, materials and machinery, and business and financial services.

L.A. County has also been a leader in advancing environmental innovation. As the foremost market for alternative fuel vehicles, energy efficiency and clean air initiatives, L.A. County offers abundant opportunities for green growth. In fact, California invested over $3.3 billion in clean technologies in 2008 and ranks first in the nation in new energy patents.

With a larger consular corp than any American city outside Washington, D.C. and more than 220 languages and cultures represented across the County, Los Angeles is increasingly being recognized as the Capital of the Pacific Rim. The County's cultural and economic diversity, educational opportunities, extensive infrastructure and thriving industry clusters have created unparalleled opportunities for all its residents and helped to establish L.A. County's growth and economic success.

Building on our strengths to ensure our region's continued economic health, we believe that it is critical that we implement this consensus strategic plan for economic development. On the following pages, we have identified five aspirational goals and 12 objectives that have been developed to ensure our region's continued success.

I. PREPARE AN EDUCATED WORKFORCE

Los Angeles County is home to numerous highly-educated workers, and businesses in the area benefit from an industrious, talented and diverse workforce. To stay competitive in the global economy, Los Angeles County will need to maintain and expand its educated workforce and entrepreneurial class. Higher education provided by Caltech, UCLA and USC, numerous California State University campuses, private universities and colleges, and community colleges is superb, but there is still substantial room for improvement in K-12 education where student performance and dropout rates are both major areas of concern. The Educated Workforce component aims to improve educational outcomes, align education and training programs with business needs, and ensure that all potential workers are prepared to participate in the dynamic L.A. County economy.

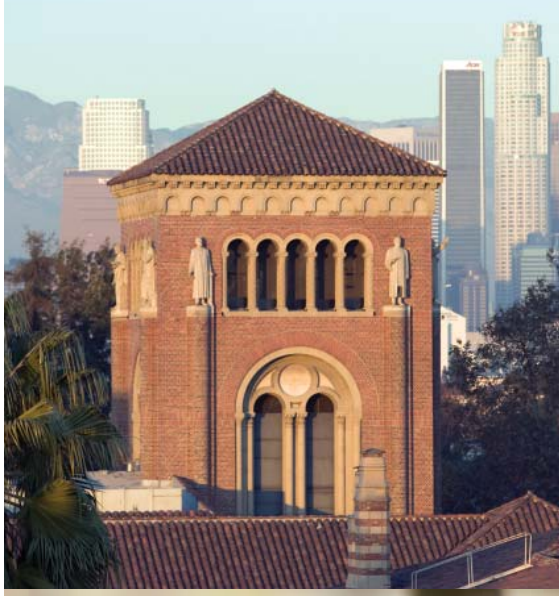
OBJECTIVE ONE:

Ensure successful education outcomes at every level, i.e., all students should, at a minimum, achieve grade-level proficiency and graduate.

Make schools better by tracking, assessing and reporting student performance outcomes; increasing the number of charter schools and small schools/learning communities in schools; increasing the use of technology at all levels; increasing arts, language, STEM education and preparation for employment opportunities in key industries; improving teacher quality and accountability through enhanced training, recruitment and incentives; implementing multiple pathway approaches which prepare students from diverse backgrounds for college, careers and entrepreneurship; and creating and strengthening linkages among K-12 schools, community colleges and universities.

Connect schools and communities by linking local community organizations, non-profits, businesses and corporate leaders with schools through formal partnerships, and implementing family education programs and after-school programs.

Increase student access and engagement by teaching and motivating parents to be meaningfully engaged in their children's educational success; educating parents and students on career opportunities and readiness requirements; and increasing access to scholarships, loans and grants for education.



OBJECTIVE TWO:

Ensure that businesses have enough workers with the right skill sets to meet their needs.

Conduct and publish research on workforce shortages, skill gaps and required proficiencies; and evaluate existing education, training and placement programs for continuous improvement.

Fund workforce intermediaries to bring together stakeholders in targeted industry sectors to address existing and projected future workforce gaps by facilitating more opportunities for public-private collaboration between individual businesses, community colleges and universities, and promoting industry-driven curricula and technical education based on employer-recognized certification.

Integrate workforce training activities and higher education (from entry to college/university-based to enhanced professional education) to create seamless career pathways leading to high-value jobs in target industries (e.g., aerospace engineers).

Expand customized, sector-based programs to train larger numbers of people and market them better to job seekers.

Retain and attract highly-skilled workers and develop the next generation of managerial talent.

Co-locate public services such as WorkSource/OneSource centers on college campuses.

OBJECTIVE THREE:

Prepare job seekers and incumbent workers to enter sectors with high-value jobs – as measured by wages, benefits and additional income attracted into the County – and built-in career ladders.

Create programs that expand the workforce by reconnecting high school dropouts to educational and training opportunities.

Develop, expand and upgrade the skills of the existing workforce.

Begin career awareness programs in middle school. Offer student internships, job shadowing, apprenticeships, concurrent enrollment programs, soft skills training, improved career counseling, youth employment and more parent education on careers to provide students with career awareness and work experience.

II. CREATE A BUSINESS-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Los Angeles County is a great place to do business, but so are many other locations. In today's globally competitive economy where businesses have flexibility in their location decisions, Los Angeles must be as welcoming as possible to businesses of all sizes. All firms, and particularly smaller ones with fewer resources, need to be able to focus their energies on serving their customers rather than interacting with government. Being business-friendly means: state, county and city governments are customer-driven in their interactions with businesses; government processes are rational, predictable, understandable and timely; and public and private economic development agencies help businesses thrive and create good quality jobs.

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OBJECTIVE ONE:

Establish and promote a business-friendly environment to create and retain good quality jobs.

Educate local and statewide stakeholders on the value of private sector businesses as generators of jobs, tax revenue and regional prosperity, and encourage government officials to evaluate the economic impact of regulations and policies that affect overall competitiveness and to play a more active role in courting private sector employers.

Create a sample template and encourage cities to include an economic development element in their general plans; then, encourage L.A. County and our 88 cities to update their economic development elements regularly.

Facilitate private sector job creation by helping the state of California, L.A. County, and our 88 cities develop for their business-facing activities more efficient processes, more affordable pricing and a stronger customer service ethic.

Adopt clear, reasonable and predictable processes for the development of land to facilitate job creation and implement policies, plans and procedures to streamline review and approval processes.

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Retain and expand the existing job base while pro-actively attracting new businesses, industries, jobs and investment.

Develop and promote a compelling, consistent value proposition and brand for L.A. County, incorporating existing and aspirational strengths (e.g., size, diversity, creativity, climate, culture and commitment to green).

Increase proactive outreach to help retain and expand businesses of all sizes, with emphasis on those that are at risk of closing, leaving or being wooed away.

Align local and statewide tax incentive policies with local and regional economic development priorities.

Develop sector-specific value propositions and strategies to attract firms including incentives for businesses seeking to capitalize on opportunities created by the greening of the local, state and world economies.

Create employment and business opportunities for local firms by supporting the development of international trade, tourism, and by promoting Los Angeles County as a destination for foreign direct investment.

Ensure access to capital by expanding outreach and marketing efforts to capital sources and attracting capital investors and lenders for all stages of development; exploring creative new sources of capital such as the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program; and creating and augmenting channels/networks to connect capital to entrepreneurs, with emphasis on small, minority or women-owned businesses.

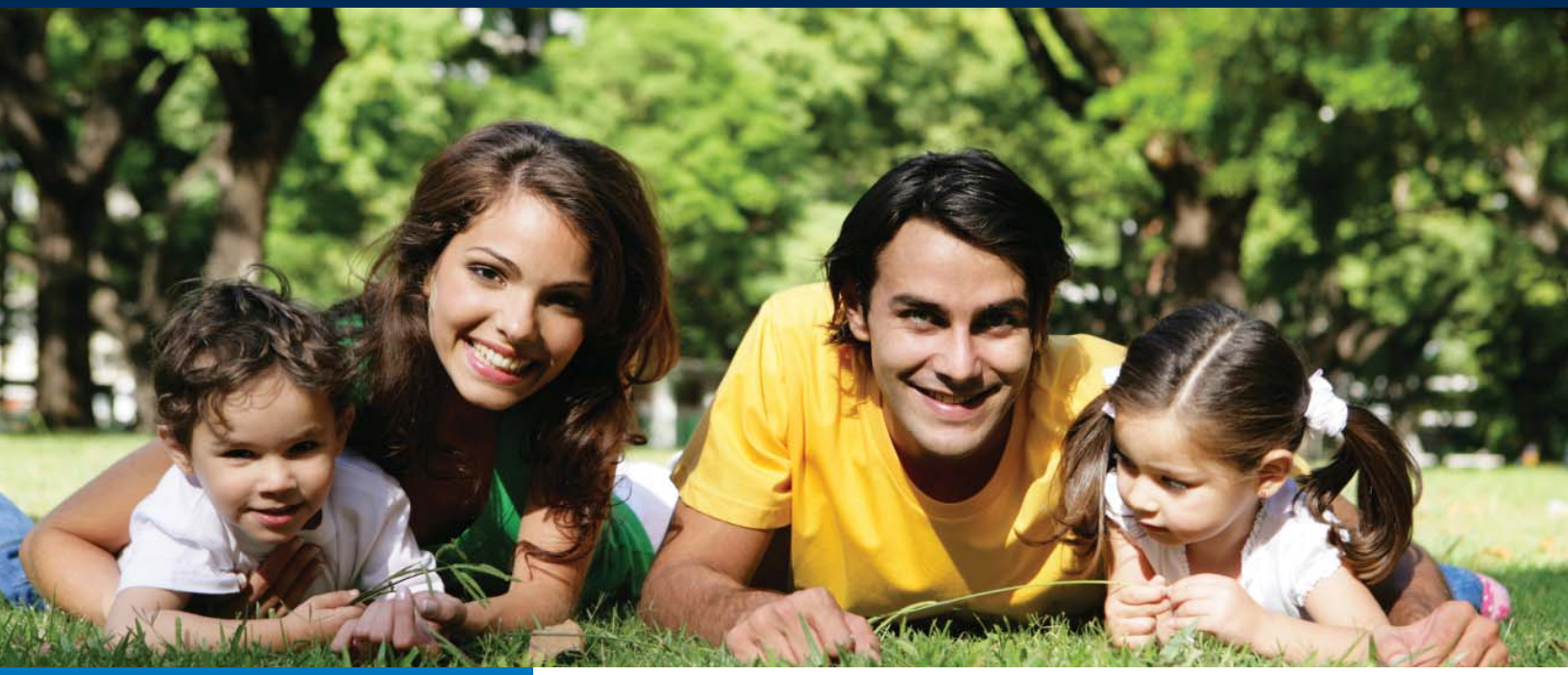
OBJECTIVE THREE:

Leverage the County's research and development facilities for the commercialization of research, technology and similar opportunities.

Aggressively seek more research funding and activity for L.A. County-based institutions.

Create a more supportive infrastructure and stronger networks to facilitate the commercialization of local research and provide needed services to entrepreneurs (venture capital, research parks, entrepreneurial management teams and mentors, etc.), focusing in particular on industries where L.A. County holds a competitive advantage (e.g., port tech, digital media, entertainment technology, etc.).

III. ENHANCE OUR QUALITY OF LIFE



Quality of life is important to everyone. We all want safe neighborhoods, improved mobility, plentiful and affordable housing, clean air and water, and healthy, vibrant communities. A high quality of life also includes promoting social equity to ensure all residents in Los Angeles County have an opportunity to live a healthy life as full participants in the larger community. From an economic development standpoint, quality of life is critical to a healthy and productive workforce. Moreover, many businesses and workers have options about where to locate, and a healthy environment and high quality of life can help attract and retain them.

OBJECTIVE ONE:

Make our communities more desirable places to live.

Ensure public safety by supporting programs that reduce crime (such as Business Watch, Neighborhood Watch, volunteer patrols, anti-gang programs and rapid response to "broken window" problems).

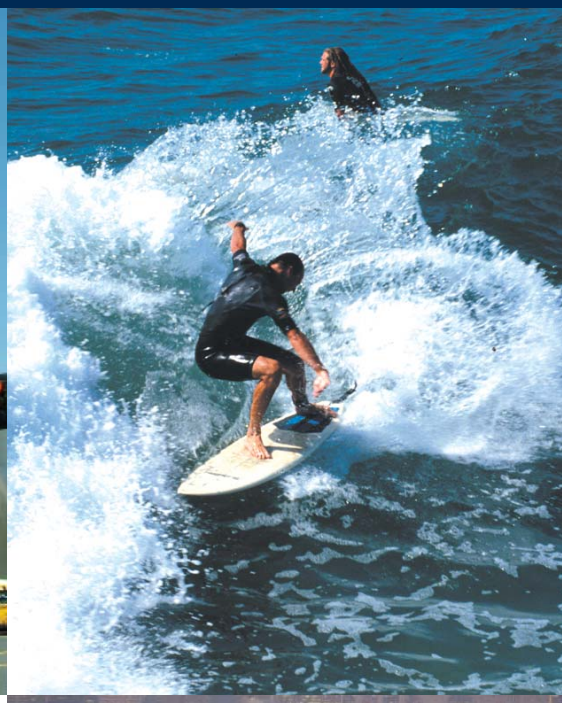
Improve mobility and reduce traffic congestion and its environmental impacts by employing technology and traffic management strategies to reduce demand and optimize system efficiency; making transit easier and more desirable to use; improving walkability and bicycling; encouraging transit-oriented development and densification where appropriate; offering incentives for carpooling and transit; and improving the jobs/housing balance.

Remove obstacles and create incentives to encourage the construction of a large quantity and wide range of housing of all types (i.e., condos, apartments, townhouses, single-family homes, etc.), with a particular emphasis on adding affordable and workforce housing units.

Promote healthy living by building more parks and expanding recreational activities, and encouraging healthy living through active lifestyles, wellness programs and locally-sourced nutritious food supplies (e.g., community gardens and farmers markets).

Encourage and expand cultural and artistic amenities that celebrate our diversity and attract local and global patrons.

Create healthy, vibrant and strong communities by balancing land use, transportation, economic development, housing and environmental improvement objectives.



OBJECTIVE TWO:

Use all available resources (i.e., Hope VI funding, etc.) and adopt new approaches to revitalize low-income communities.

Increase community participation in the planning and jobs creation process.

Use smart growth principles to economically integrate communities, maximize the creation of new affordable and workforce housing units, and create more open space for residents.

"In today's global economy, the places that attract and retain talent will win, and those who don't will lose."

–Richard Florida, Author of *The Flight of the Creative Class.*

IV. IMPLEMENT SMART LAND USE

Los Angeles County must preserve an adequate supply of jobs-creating land so that current residents and their children will have a place to work and earn a decent living. The population density in the County is among the highest in the nation, placing a premium on the efficient use of the limited supply of land, particularly in urban areas. Smart land use provides adequate space for both employment uses and housing through strategies such as by-right development, infill development, redevelopment, and reuse of obsolete industrial land.

OBJECTIVE ONE:

Maintain an adequate supply of jobs-creating land.

Create and maintain a database of County-wide, jobs-creating land to facilitate the retention and expansion of local companies as well as the attraction of new companies to the County.

Implement an employment land preservation policy that restricts re-zoning of industrially-zoned land to other uses without formal consideration and recognition of: the need for adequate buffering between industrial land and incompatible uses; how and where that industrial land will be replaced elsewhere in the County; whether the proposed change-of-use development will increase land values of surrounding industrial land and/or encroach on nearby viable industries; and whether the new use will produce more high-value jobs than alternative industrial uses.

Make better use of the public sector's real estate portfolio to facilitate jobs-producing projects.

Reserve employment land (existing and vacant) for research and development uses, especially land located near research institutions and universities, using strategies such as creating community land trusts, land banking, and/or through the creation of business, industrial, manufacturing or research and development zones.

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Develop and rehabilitate land to meet strategic economic development objectives.

Update general, community and specific plans to enable by-right development and rectify weaknesses in the existing zoning classifications and remedy the reactive, case-by-case, spot zoning approach focused on individual parcels.

Develop, adopt and implement an incentive program to retain commercial and industrial activities and revitalize obsolete industrial land.

Create and promote public/private collaboration programs to facilitate infill development and redevelopment of brownfield sites, underutilized industrial and commercial properties and functionally obsolete buildings.

Collaborate on securing state and federal grants, other public financing vehicles, and tax incentive programs such as the establishment, renewal, implementation, management and/or expansion of Enterprise Zones, Recycling Market Development Zones, Business Improvement Zones, Redevelopment Agencies, as well as other innovative programs that facilitate community development and rehabilitation.

Reform the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to eliminate abusive uses of the statute for non-environmental purposes, such as an existing business seeking to block competitors.

V. BUILD 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE

World-class infrastructure, notably the freeways, ports, airport and water system, underpinned the rise of the Los Angeles County economy to the 19th largest in the world, ranking it ahead of Taiwan. The key infrastructure investments were made a generation or more ago and have served the County well. To maintain its competitive edge in today's global economy, the region must fix the infrastructure development process and invest in upgrading its critical infrastructure.

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OBJECTIVE ONE:

Fix the broken infrastructure development process.

Restore the balance between local and regional interests in considering approval of infrastructure projects.

Promote enabling legislation allowing for best practices (e.g., design/build, public-private partnerships, and performance contracting) to expedite infrastructure development.

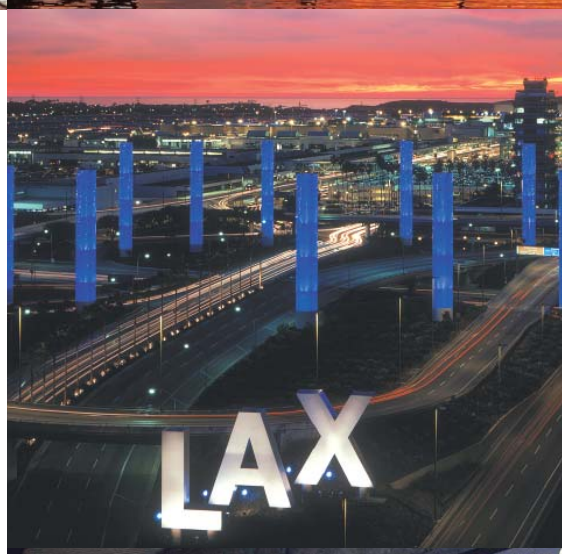
Advocate for our fair share of public infrastructure dollars and support programs that create opportunities for local contractors from under-served communities.

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Build and maintain critical infrastructure for L.A. County.

Expedite green growth at the Ports of L.A. and Long Beach by speeding implementation of the Clean Air Action Plan, developing and deploying locally-sourced and driven green technology solutions, and adding infrastructure to shift container traffic from road to rail or other cleaner modes.

Modernize Los Angeles International Airport by improving domestic and international terminals, airfield safety and efficiency, passenger experience and accessibility into and out of LAX, while also encouraging the further development and improvement of other airports throughout Southern California.



Ensure a reliable supply of clean and affordable energy by encouraging green energy production from public and private sources, building necessary transmission lines to access clean energy, improving network efficiency and reducing demand (e.g., through energy efficiency programs).

Ensure a reliable supply of clean and affordable water by implementing strategies such as urban water conservation, local stormwater capture, water recycling, and groundwater storage while also pursuing an environmentally-sound solution for the Sacramento Delta that protects Southern California water supplies.

Create a world-class ground transportation network by expanding and improving the quality and user appeal of mass transit and alternative modes (such as bike paths/lanes and community/company buses), improving highway and road capacity, and investing in goods movement infrastructure (such as truck lanes, near-dock intermodal rail yards, and grade-separated rail corridors).

Improve waste-handling capabilities by expanding recycling efforts, finding environmentally-friendly means of disposal for non-recyclables, and upgrading the region's sewage treatment system, while reducing the waste stream to landfills by encouraging the use of locally-manufactured products that are recyclable, have long life cycles and use less packaging.

Support public and private efforts to continuously improve wired and wireless communications networks in the County to match or exceed the highest global standards for speed and reliability.

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*Participants of the focus group meetings for the strategic planning process.

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