

# POLICY BOOKLET | 2012-2013



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



# Strategic Plan for Economic Development

[www.LACountyStrategicPlan.com](http://www.LACountyStrategicPlan.com)

## A MESSAGE

We offer you the LAEDC 2012-2013 Policy Booklet, which contains our 2012-2013 policy agenda, in the hope that the ideas, initiatives and specific recommendations contained herein will be useful as you continue to engage in and move forward on your own public service activities – whether in your own local communities, throughout the entire Los Angeles region, up in Sacramento, or back in Washington, DC.

Over the last few years, the LAEDC has developed and carried out a very thoughtful and highly effective local, state and federal policy program to advance the implementation of Los Angeles County's first-ever, consensus-driven Strategic Plan for Economic Development. We invite you to use this booklet to learn more about the LAEDC's key 2012 policy initiatives, and we urge you to look for opportunities to get involved, partner with us on recommended actions and assume even greater responsibility for the health and vibrancy of your own communities and Los Angeles County as a whole. Although nobody can do all that needs to be done, everyone can do something. Working together as true civic stewards, we can successfully fulfill our shared vision to ensure a strong, diverse and sustainable economy for Los Angeles County's residents and communities.

**BILL ALLEN**

President & Chief Executive Officer

**DAVID FLAKS**

Chief Operating Officer

# INTRODUCTION

The vibrancy and creativity of Los Angeles County originates with the region's cultural, economic, educational and social diversity that exists here. This diversity provides layers of complexities that underpins and inspires a creative base that produces some of the world's greatest ideas; iconic works of art, entertainment and architecture; and industry-changing breakthroughs in areas as wide-ranging as: engineering, medicine, media, design, information technology and clean technology. But in order for our region to capitalize on these benefits, economic development priorities must be set, adopted and advanced.

The policy goals adopted by the **LAEDC** for 2012-2013 will support, drive and grow our world-leading creative economy in L.A. County.



**Boost Advanced Manufacturing, Creative and Export-Oriented Sectors**



**Fix the Broken Infrastructure Development, Funding and Delivery**



**Build More Liveable Communities in L.A. County**

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# Boost Advanced Manufacturing, Creative and Export-Oriented Sectors



## POLICY INITIATIVE 1

Make education relevant by developing and maintaining linkages among K-12, community colleges, and manufacturing-related industries, allowing for seamless lifelong learning with built-in career pathways.

**THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVELS:**

- Revive and/or expand the industrial arts curriculum in community colleges to meet the demands of high-skill manufacturing jobs
- Modernize vocational guidance to promote career pathways in high-skill manufacturing
- Institute subsidized tuition (with private industry support) for technical training programs in community colleges, especially for incumbent workers

## POLICY INITIATIVE 2

Engage employers in emerging sectors to address the skill needs of the innovation economy through the specific training of job seekers and incumbent workers for emerging opportunities in fast-growing developing sectors, such as Health Information Technology (HIT).

**THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:**

- Create and/or expand HIT training, certificate and degree programs
- Develop a system of alignment among healthcare-themed high schools, accredited HIT programs at the community college level and relevant certification programs
- Communicate to all relevant stakeholders the rapidly growing need for HIT professionals in our local economy

## POLICY INITIATIVE 3

Preserve, revitalize and expand L.A. County's jobs-producing land base to support advanced manufacturing and innovation.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:

- Update municipal and county zoning codes to reflect the 21st century economy by creating a specific commercial land use designation that can also house industrial uses
- Provide more certainty and clarity early on in the development process regarding what's allowed or not allowed (for example, issuing "zoning confirmation letters" at the beginning of the process to clarify what can/cannot be done on a particular parcel)
- Expedite permit reviews and approvals (via an ombudsman, one-stop-shop, etc.)
- Enable by-right development in general and community plans, e.g., Hollywood Community Plan Update

## POLICY INITIATIVE 4

Create visas for foreign-born, U.S. STEM-educated Ph.D.s and start-up entrepreneurs, ensuring that foreign students that become U.S. educated STEM graduates are able to stay and work in the U.S. in the fields from which they graduate as well as encouraging foreign-born entrepreneurs to come, stay and expand in Los Angeles County.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL:

- Create a new class of visas that will allow foreign-born but U.S. STEM-educated Ph.D.s to stay and work in the U.S. in the fields they graduate from
- Create a new class of visas that will incentivize foreign-born entrepreneurs to start a business here and employ U.S. workers

## POLICY INITIATIVE 5

Preserve the California Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program to revitalize economically-challenged areas throughout the state, to encourage development in blighted neighborhoods, and to create economically-stable communities by embracing entrepreneurship and private sector market forces to stimulate local economies.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Oppose all efforts to repeal or severely gut the EZ Program
- Enhance the EZ program's effectiveness, impact and return on investment, while reducing its cost

## POLICY INITIATIVE 6

Increase the competitive advantages of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to ensure California's ports remain competitive both nationally as well as globally, especially since the Gulf and East Coast ports have been attracting business from West Coast seaports over the past decade and this competition will only intensify after the expansion of the Panama Canal in 2014.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Provide tax credits to incentivize increases in trade export volumes
- Include "Goods Movement" projects in the definition of "leadership projects" under AB 900 for expedited CEQA judicial review

## POLICY INITIATIVE 7

Protect and grow L.A. County's film & television industry and curb runaway production.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL AND FEDERAL LEVELS, RESPECTIVELY:

- Develop a model ordinance for cities to adopt to ensure consistency county-wide in permitting and filming policies
- Stop online piracy





# Fix the Broken Infrastructure Development, Funding and Delivery



## POLICY INITIATIVE 1

Ensure the success of 30/10 through programs like Build California Bonds, Infrastructure Financing Districts and tax increment financing.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Institute a Build California Bond Program to finance and deliver 30/10 and other statewide critical infrastructure projects
- Create a mechanism to use tax increment financing for transit projects to enable additional transportation infrastructure financing
- Reform the California Infrastructure Financing District (IFD) program by eliminating the two-thirds vote approval to create the IFD and issue bonds to finance public facilities as well as increase the life of an IFD from 30 years to 40 years

## POLICY INITIATIVE 2

Reorganize the California Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank) to improve the overall effectiveness of the I-Bank as well as initiatives to better enable the I-Bank to meet its critical economic development function of funding critical infrastructure projects and generating much-needed jobs (as well as tax revenue) for the State of California.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Grant the I-Bank greater autonomy to control its own administrative functions
- Increase the I-Bank's ability to be awarded federal funds
- Strengthen the role of the I-Bank in economic development activities
- Market the I-Bank to public agencies as a viable source of infrastructure financing

# POLICY INITIATIVE 3

Increase accessibility to and utilization of public-private partnerships (P3s) by local and state agencies.

## THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Increase funding capacity by clarifying that private sector financing (and capital) can take several different forms, e.g., cash, carrying costs, in-kind contributions, loans, etc.— rather than the more-limiting “investment capital” definition used in the existing statute
- Clarify that the public sector has the authority to co-invest in the infrastructure project
- Increase and provide greater flexibility in terms of the types of post-construction operations and “control” methods that the private sector and public sector can utilize—rather than being limited to leasing or ownership in order to open up additional options that may better fit the structure of the partnership
- Eliminate the (current 35-year) time requirement for lease, ownership, or other use by a private sector entity
- Provide greater flexibility in the selection of a private sector financing partner
- Apply the P3 authority to “non-revenue producing” infrastructure assets as well as broadening its applicability to revenue-producing assets, such as sewer systems and broaden P3 applicability to the state government—rather than to local agencies only
- Establish a center of excellence for P3s, so local governments have a base of best management practices expertise to consult when considering P3s





## POLICY INITIATIVE 4

Support efforts to modernize L.A. County's regional aviation system and its principal airport, Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), including providing for better customer experience, improved safety, and increased operational efficiency.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:

- Increase the number of U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents at LAX to boost the international traveling experience and increase throughput into the L.A. economy
- Accelerate the Specific Plan Amendment Study (SPAS) process to expand capabilities of LAX to conveniently and safely accommodate the forecasted increase in air cargo and passenger traffic

## POLICY INITIATIVE 5

Restore the original intent of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and strengthen its environmental protections by assuring the informed consideration of the environmental impacts of any project; by protecting a petitioner's right to raise legitimate environmental concerns; and by mitigating CEQA's ability to be nefariously abused for non-environmental objectives.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Eliminate suits that focus on procedural errors that have no effect on the environment by amending the statute so as to provide that a lead agency's actions under CEQA may not be set aside by a court unless the alleged CEQA defect prevented the lead agency from considering a feasible mitigation measure for a significant environmental impact which was presented to the lead agency by the Petitioner
- Clarify that the term "environment" should pertain only to the "natural" environment and not to urban conditions such as traffic, parking, or public services
- Clarify that only project changes resulting in a new or worse unmitigated significant environmental impact triggers additional CEQA review
- Require disclosure of all petitioners (and petitioner groups) and attestation of economic interest of each petitioner to inform court and parties of identities and any economic interests
- Authorize penalties for false or incomplete disclosure of petitioner identities and economic interest
- Allow standing to be challenged by a motion alleging that petitions are substantially motivated by economic or other interests outside the zone of natural environmental conditions to be impacted by the project
- Limit remedies to compelling enforcement of environmental mitigation measures (not economic or other terms) to discourage non-environmental petitioners

## POLICY INITIATIVE 6

Remove barriers to ensure the successful development of critical infrastructure by addressing both regulatory and administrative barriers that prevent the successful and expeditious deployment of critical infrastructure projects that would create jobs and tax revenue.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Provide the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) with an ongoing and general exemption from restrictive personnel reductions, e.g., furloughs, state hiring freezes and mandatory personnel savings
- Authorize ongoing and general exemptions for OSHPD from overly restrictive administrative policies that impede progress, e.g., travel restrictions
- Streamline and/or expedite the permit and approval process for oil and gas production developments

## POLICY INITIATIVE 7

Eliminate/streamline regulatory obstacles that impede the development of waste-to-energy facilities.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Incorporate waste-to-energy projects into existing and future “renewable energy” financing and incentives

## POLICY INITIATIVE 8

Develop strategies and advance policies to upgrade (“green”) existing building infrastructure by reducing/removing barriers, providing incentives for green buildings and ensuring the successful and expeditious upgrade of existing building infrastructure.

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:

- Develop over-the-counter approvals for nonstructural energy updates in L.A. County and its 88 cities

### THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:

- Institute and/or expand On-Bill Financing, which provides a financing mechanism for energy-efficiency projects via 0% interest loans and loan repayment through the utility bill



## POLICY INITIATIVE 9

Develop and deploy L.A. County's electric vehicle infrastructure.

THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL:

- Provide and expedite online permitting for electric vehicle charging equipment installation permits
- Develop commercial and residential rebates for charging equipment and installations as well as alternative financing capabilities, e.g., On-Bill Financing and Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing
- Develop incentives for both new and existing construction to increase access to charging infrastructure
- Track all completed and planned installations of chargers

# Build More Liveable Communities in L.A. County



## POLICY INITIATIVE 1

Develop and include specific job targets in RTP/SCS.

**THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE STATE LEVEL:**

- Require job targets in regional and/or local plans and tie the receipt of specific public revenue streams to the achievement of those job target goals

## POLICY INITIATIVE 2

Implement “Complete Streets” in Los Angeles County to improve mobility for all modes and enhance the viability of non-automobile travel.

**THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL:**

- Remove barriers that prevent the successful deployment of the Streets4People Pilot Program (e.g., liability concerns)
- Advance initiatives that would enable a more far-reaching “Complete Streets” program

## POLICY INITIATIVE 3

Implement Home for Good L.A. — an effort to end chronic and veteran homelessness.

**THE LAEDC RECOMMENDS TAKING THE FOLLOWING ACTION AT THE LOCAL, STATE & FEDERAL LEVEL:**

- Solve the L.A. region’s chronic and veteran homelessness problem – ensuring a better quality of life for all residents – by implementing Home for Good L.A.’s action plan

## FOR LAWMAKERS

The task of shaping policies to reinvigorate the Los Angeles County and California economies has become arguably one of the greatest, and most closely followed, challenges of your public careers. We know that as lawmakers, you are faced with making difficult decisions in the midst of a very tumultuous – but critically important – point in our economic history. Thankfully, the LAEDC combines expert economic research and applied analysis to develop objective, rationally-based and supportable policy solutions.

As you work with your colleagues to find the best path forward for the communities of Los Angeles County and the State of California, we encourage you to connect with and draw on some of the LAEDC's unmatched business assistance, economic research and analysis, and policy resources.

If you are interested in speaking with one of our economic or policy experts, please contact:

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## BE A CHAMPION AND SPREAD THE WORD

Whether you are a business owner or an employee of one, a recent graduate looking for your first job or unemployed worker looking for your first job in 6 months, a regional thought leader or simply a concerned citizen, there are many opportunities to get involved, to take responsibility for the health and vibrancy of your community, and to raise your voice on these important issues in Los Angeles County, at the State Capitol in Sacramento or with federal officials in Washington, DC.

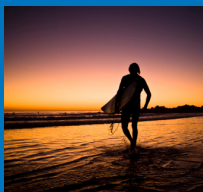
- Contact your elected officials via letters, emails or using social media
- Submit Opinion Editorials or Letters to the Editor in local and statewide publications
- Share your story through the LAEDC's guest blog at: [laedc.tumblr.com](http://laedc.tumblr.com)
- Become a member of the LAEDC and participate as a thought leader in one of the LAEDC's many policy committees

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