

TO CITY CLERK FOR PLACEMENT ON NEXT
REGULAR COUNCIL AGENDA TO BE POSTED #56

MOTION

I MOVE that the Council Action of November 21, 2018 relative to “Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) / Neighborhood Improvement Activities / Council District 10 / AB1290 Fund” (CF 14-1235) BE AMENDED to transfer the responsibility / administration of the contract in this matter from the City Clerk to the Bureau of Street Services so that the Bureau of Street Services will be responsible for executing the final amendment to the contract and overseeing the work conducted by LANI.

PRESENTED BY *Herb J. Wesson, Jr.*
HERB J. WESSON, Jr.
Councilman, 10th District

SECONDED BY *Mary Martinez*

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Over the past 35 years, Samitaur Constructs has been a pioneer in the modernizing of Los Angeles and Culver City. Samitaur's owners and founders, Frederick, and Laurie Samitaur Smith, have long been recognized as both patrons of the arts and frequent supporters of charitable and civic causes throughout Los Angeles. And together they have shared in a strong commitment to achieve lasting community revitalization through their unique and non-traditional approach.

Frederick and Laurie have become known for uplifting economic redevelopment work that has brought healing and regeneration to declining neighborhoods. The impactful visual style of Samitaur's properties, along with the inventive economic incentives they have offered their tenants, has made Frederick and Laurie's "Conjunctive Points" project in South Central Los Angeles and adjacent Culver City a destination spot for highly creative and innovative companies in the high tech, entertainment, and design industries.

Decades ago, Frederick and Laurie began their commitment to job creation and to a dramatic change in people's perception of dying neighborhoods and how to save them. They made an unconventional decision to build a unique building that faced backwards into South Central, instead of turning its back on the community by typically facing the street. Frederick and Laurie built the Samitaur building little by little, 21 years after purchasing that neglected property in 1975 in a then "red-lined" district. Then one day in 1996, KODAK, surprisingly showed up in a traditionally disdained neighborhood at the just-completed Samitaur building at 5780 West Jefferson Boulevard. The head of KODAK's brand new Digital Division said he had "been endlessly searching City-wide for an unusual building that would express the cutting-edge importance of my company's state-of-the-art technology!"

Frederick and Laurie developed the Conjunctive Points philosophy out of necessity. It is premised on an ecosystem based on the interconnectivity of individuals and ideas. And the practice of that philosophy has required years of nurturing the intuitive interaction of many different people, and innumerable diverse companies, each with their own distinct ambition to improve the status quo – until those individual Points became Conjunctively joined through the invisible threads of their shared convictions, forming a network of Conjunctive Points.

Throughout those years, Frederick and Laurie have been focused on attracting well-endowed successful companies to move into Conjunctive Points in order to offer job training and employment to the neighborhood's unemployed – and not excluding young gang members (as Frederick and Laurie convinced KODAK to do in the late 90's with resounding success). At the same time, Frederick and Laurie were dedicated to seeking out those brilliant young Start-Up companies whose ingenious inventions would set the benchmarks for the future. Thus, an innate attraction existed between the established companies and these gifted newcomers, inevitably producing spontaneous symbiotic relationships throughout Conjunctive Points that were of great benefit to all.

Internationally recognized as a unique urban experiment in the fusion of art, architecture, and technology, within the context of economic rebirth, Conjunctive Points has had extensive worldwide press coverage, and has received numerous prestigious awards locally, nationally, and internationally. It has been recognized by the National American Institute of Architects, the Urban

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We need a vision for our city that says “there is going to be justice.”

The Covid-19 public health pandemic has wreaked havoc on the Los Angeles region, and is leaving behind an equally devastating economic crisis that is disproportionately harming communities of color. More than 2.4 million workers lost their jobs in April, and unemployment rates in May, 2020 are four times greater than a year ago.

Before the current economic crisis caused by the coronavirus, when unemployment was low, the economic disparities along racial divisions was staggering: unemployment rates for Latinos were 34% higher than for Whites, and 71% higher for Blacks than for Whites, according to numbers from the State of California.

The disparities faced by communities of color have only gotten worse since the pandemic. Nationally, Black unemployment is 25% higher than White unemployment, and in Los Angeles, unemployment in mostly Black neighborhoods is twice as high as in mostly White neighborhoods.

A vision for justice means communities of color must be invested in, and have access to, and placement in, high quality employment.

The County Federation of Labor and its affiliates have provided job training and placement to workers for many years. They have established joint employer-union training centers and a number of these have been recognized by the State of California as High Road Training Partners, and designated the key training organization for the entire state in their respective industries.

Their success is predicated on several key factors:

- Because these are joint union-employer funds, worker placement rates are higher;
- The involvement of union members ensures mentoring for newly placed trainees that helps them remain in the job;
- The wages at union workplaces are higher and include health care, making them more attractive jobs; and
- Construction, health care and hospitality are key growth industries for our region.

Construction jobs will be critical to our economic rebound, and have well established career pipelines that lift workers and their families out of poverty. Health care jobs, including health promoters and contact tracers, have never been more critical, and there is a need to train and hire more workers within this field. Meanwhile, we need the hospitality industry to rebound and bring critical dollars into our City coffers, and that relies on higher safety standards to ensure that guests feel safe to visit a hotel, and additional cleaning positions. Further, the hospitality industry has the infrastructure in place to train workers in the food services industry, which includes how to prepare and distribute meals to vulnerable populations who are more susceptible to the coronavirus, like the elderly and those with preexisting medical conditions.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Administrative Officer and Chief Legislative Analyst identify \$4.5 million for a High Road Training Program from among federal CARES dollars and Workforce Investment funds;

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I FURTHER MOVE that the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor be designated the fiduciary for the High Road Training Program, and they distribute funds equally among the Hospitality Training Academy (HTA), Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC) and Apprenticeship Readiness Fund;

I FURTHER MOVE that the High Road Training Program provide training to unemployed workers in the 15% of census tracts with the highest unemployment rates as of May, 2020.

PRESENTED BY: 
HERB J. WESSON, JR.
Councilmember, 10th District

SECONDED BY: 

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