FIRST 5 LA

SUBJECT:
Request to Amend a Strategic Partnership with Southern California Grantmakers, Fiscal Sponsor for the Center for Strategic Partnerships, from July 2021 to September 2021 to Support Technical Assistance to LA County Department of Mental Health to Continue to Operationalize Mental Health Services Act/Prevention and Early Intervention Funds for Prevention Efforts in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The current total project cost is $225,000.

RECOMMENDATION (PROVIDED AS INFORMATION):
This memo is provided as information for the Board’s consideration at July 9th, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting. First 5 LA staff recommends that at the September 10th, 2020 Commission meeting, the Board approve the amendment and extension of a Strategic Partnership with Southern California Grantmakers, Fiscal Sponsor for the Center for Strategic Partnerships for an amount not to exceed $225,000 through September 2021. Staff anticipates returning to the Board to seek authority to execute a contract in September 2020. Funds for FY 2020-2021 are included within the current First 5 LA Programmatic Budget under Families Strategy 1 - Home Visiting, Home Visiting Sustainability Support in Mental Health Systems, which will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval in July 2020. Unused FY 2019-20 contracted funds will be included in the FY 2020-21 budget at mid-year as part of the mid-year adjustment process.

BACKGROUND:
The December 2016 home visiting board motion and the resulting 2018 plan “Strengthening Home Visiting in Los Angeles County: A Plan To Improve Child, Family, and Community Well-Being”, lays out strategies for the County of Los Angeles, the County’s Department of Public Health, First 5 LA, and their community partners to provide the supports that will help young children and communities thrive. The home visiting motion passed by the Board of Supervisors and subsequent report significantly elevated the profile of home visiting as a holistic family-strengthening investment to improve outcomes for families with young children countywide. The motion identified several key priorities, one of which is to “identify a framework to maximize resources by leveraging available funding and where possible identify new and existing but not maximized revenue streams.” In short, the motion directed partners to identify a plan for sustainability of universally-offered home visiting efforts countywide, a recommendation that is further emphasized in the report.

This directive in the Board motion and subsequent report catalyzed several important emerging opportunities in sustainability for home visiting efforts. Significant among them, the LA County Department of Mental Health (DMH) re-directed $40M of available Mental Health Services Act-Prevention and Early Intervention (MHSA-PEI) funding over two years to expand mental health services and supports to programs focused on trauma-informed prevention and early intervention for at-risk children, youth, and families, including expanding home visiting services. Since the writing of the original Strategic Partnership memo, the funding for the full expansion of home visiting has expired; however, it continues to be utilized for support of the Nurse Family Partnership program administered by the Department of Public Health and, importantly, has enabled DMH to increase its role as an active and critical partner in home visiting systems building in the County. For example, DMH continues to be a key partner in ensuring effective referrals, and is participating in efforts funded by the Heising-Simons Foundation to bring the key leaders of home visiting in Los Angeles County together to determine the vision for the future of the system. In this role, DMH is demonstrating its leadership in the home visiting system in Los Angeles County, which was originally facilitated by the introduction of the MHSA-PEI funding for home visiting and will be further catalyzed by the continuation of this Strategic Partnership in its third year. Strengthening this capacity within DMH is consistent with First 5 LA’s efforts on sustainability, increase family supports, and prevention and early intervention.
This memo is being updated in July of 2020 to apply the lens of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families and communities to this continuing scope of work. As the emergent nature of the need to respond to put in place strategies to support communities and families as a result of COVID-19 subsides, and Los Angeles County moves into a recovery phase, it will be essential to identify and implement strategies that will help support communities and families in their mental health, in which home visiting can play a key role. This work will necessitate continuing to facilitate strong partnerships among key stakeholders, including First 5 LA and the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, and Child and Family Services, among others. As noted above, this Strategic Partnership helps to ensure that DMH can continue being a critical partner in supporting the home visiting system in Los Angeles County, particularly in light of the specific challenges and opportunities that the COVID-19 pandemic presents, such as transitioning to virtual home visiting and other early intervention and prevention services.

The original Strategic Partnership, which represented a partnership between First 5 LA and the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP) to complete this work, was extended in July 2019. The requested amendment and extension of this Strategic Partnership through September 2021 will allow the scope of work to continue with the applied lens of supporting families and communities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pursuant to the Procurement Policy, Strategic Partnerships of $75,000 or more in a fiscal year must be presented to the Board for approval. Staff is not requesting additional funds over those that have already been approved, but is requesting an amendment and extension of this Strategic Partnership to account for the lens of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for an amount not to exceed $225,000 to comply with this policy.

GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES #5 AND #6 (SUSTAINABILITY AND LEVERAGING):
The Strategic Partnership with Southern California Grantmakers will leverage funds from several philanthropic partners as detailed under the leveraging criteria below.

In regard to sustainability, as mentioned above, the LA County Board of Supervisors passed a Home Visiting motion in December 2016 that significantly elevated the profile of home visiting as a holistic intervention to improve outcomes for families with young children countywide. The motion identified several key priorities, one of which is to “identify a framework to maximize resources by leveraging available funding and where possible identify new and existing but not maximized revenue streams.” In short, the motion directs partners to identify a plan for sustainability of expanded home visiting efforts countywide.

Since the passage of the motion in 2016, the home visiting system in LA County has evolved not only as a result of the motion and the subsequent planning that occurred since, but also as a result of several new funding streams for home visiting that have come or are coming into the County from multiple sources. This includes the aforementioned funding from MHSA-PEI as well as DPSS CalWORKs, and the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP). A critical component of this, the large infusion of $40 million in MHSA-PEI funding over two years, significantly expanded home visiting funding in the County. DMH’s leadership in supporting the home visiting system continues to present an incredible sustainability opportunity for the County in the long-term. Furthermore, applying the lens of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and considering how to support the mental health needs of families and communities as a result of the pandemic will help to ensure that the system remains sustained in the light of the specific challenges raised as a result of pandemic.

In addition to the funding that First 5 LA has already provided, there are several funding and staffing resources that have supported initial planning efforts for the MHSA-PEI funding, and others that will support continued efforts. For example, in the first year of this project, Ms. Cugley played a pivotal role in ensuring the effective and efficient utilization of the MHSA-PEI dollars. Finally, it is anticipated that First 5 LA’s commitment will catalyze and be supplemented by private foundation funding in the amount of at least $75,000. Therefore, continuing to support this Strategic Partnership applying the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic will leverage these different past and ongoing funding and staffing resources.
**JUSTIFICATION:**

This Strategic Partnership meets the criteria below:

- The Strategic Partnership can provide specific resources needed by First 5 LA to implement an approved program or initiative in a manner or on a scale that makes the Strategic Partnership more cost effective than resources provided through a competitive solicitation; or
- The Strategic Partnership can implement an approved program or initiative more expeditiously than resources provided through a competitive solicitation; or
- The Strategic Partnership can provide a demonstrated level of ability or expertise that is only available in the community through the proposed Strategic Partnership; or
- The Strategic Partnership provides an opportunity to leverage First 5 LA funds to produce additional funding for the program or initiative or service.

**AND**

- The proposed Strategic Partnership is aligned with the adopted Strategic Plan.

**The Strategic Partnership provides an opportunity to leverage First 5 LA funds to produce additional funding for the program or initiative or service.**

The Strategic Partnership provides an opportunity to leverage First 5 LA funds to produce additional funding to ensure the continued effective implementation of MHSA-PEI funding towards prevention programs, including home visiting, through DMH applying the lens of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of families and communities throughout the County. In addition, the funding from First 5 LA will leverage private foundation dollars from the Weingart Foundation in the amount of $50,000 and the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation in the amount of $25,000.

Continuing this Strategic Partnership will also extend and strengthen our partnership with the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP), a key County partnership because CSP is charged with developing and strengthening new and existing partnerships and strategically leveraging federal, state, and private dollars to serve Los Angeles County’s youth, families, and communities. As mentioned above, there are several funding and staffing resources that have supported initial planning efforts for the MHSA-PEI funding in addition to First 5 LA’s initial investment, and others that will support continued efforts to operationalize the funding. Additionally, given CSP’s charge to leverage public-private partnerships and funding, by continuing this strategic partnership, First 5 LA’s investment is well-positioned for CSP to catalyze additional County and philanthropic funding to better integrate resources to enhance impact and benefit to young children and families.

Furthermore, extending this Strategic Partnership is a critical component of our myriad efforts around fund leveraging and sustainability, which is a priority of our work. For example, First 5 LA was an active participant on the Home Visiting Board Motion planning group, mentioned above, which resulted in the development and publication of the report “Strengthening Home Visiting in Los Angeles County: A Plan to Improve Child, Family, and Community Well-Being.” A key directive of the motion was to ensure sustainability of efforts. Furthermore, First 5 LA is working on piloting several strategies to leverage and maximize funding in the short- and long-terms. For example, First 5 LA is currently working with several MediCal managed care health plans to engage their members in home visiting, which will not only help to improve outcomes for young children and their families but will also increase member engagement. First 5 LA is also pursuing multiple other funding opportunities through initiatives such as the Families First Prevention Services Act and DPSS funding. Since all these efforts to secure diverse and innovative sources of sustainable funding for First 5 LA’s investments and the broader system of prevention-related services in LA County are aligned with one another, modifying this Strategic Partnership to apply the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic will strengthen this entire piece of work.
The proposed Strategic Partnership is aligned with the adopted Strategic Plan

The proposed Strategic Partnership is aligned with the 2020-2028 Strategic Plan, specifically to Strategic Priority 1, Strengthen Public and Community Systems. Particularly by applying the lens of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to this work, public and community systems will be strengthened by supporting families and communities and facilitating strong partnerships between key stakeholders across the County.

It is also closely associated with the Long Term System Outcome of Sustainability. As described above, this Strategic Partnership will strengthen First 5 LA’s overall efforts to sustain the systems that support families and communities, particularly as they try to heal from the trauma associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. With the ongoing decline of First 5 LA revenue, it is increasingly important that long term sustainability strategies are identified, prioritized and implemented. Supporting DMH in continuing to play a leadership role in these efforts represents an important opportunity to create a larger, more diverse, and more sustainable home visiting system.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff anticipates returning to the Board on September 10, 2020 to approve the amendment to the Strategic Partnership with Southern California Grantmakers, Fiscal Sponsor for the Center for Strategic Partnerships and present a contract for Board approval if the amount is over $75,000.