SUBJECT: Establish a Strategic Partnership with Public Private Strategies, LLC in the Amount of $104,999 to evaluate and expand First 5 LA’s Business Sector Engagement strategy to increase the number and demographics of small business leaders targeted for recruitment within the context of COVID-19 for the period of 24 months.

RECOMMENDATION (PROVIDED AS INFORMATION): This memo is provided as information for the Board’s consideration at the July 9, 2020 Board of Commissioner’s Meeting. First 5 LA staff recommends that at the September Commission meeting, the Board approve the establishment of a Strategic Partnership with Public Private Strategies, LLC for an amount not to exceed $104,999 the period of 24 months. Funds for FY 2020-2021 are included within the proposed First 5 LA Programmatic Budget under Strategic Partnerships – Cross-Cutting Funder Partnerships: Sector Partnership Development, to be approved by the Board of Commissioners in July 2020. Beyond FY 2020-21, funds will be pulled from the assigned fund balance which will be brought to the Board of Commissioners for approval in June of the corresponding fiscal year. At the time of budget approval, requested resources will shift from the Assigned resource category of the fund balance, dedicated for broad Strategic Plan purposes, to the Committed category, amounts dedicated for a more specified purpose.

BACKGROUND: This is a request to establish a Strategic Partnership with Public Private Strategies LLC (“PPS”) to engage the business sector for early childhood advocacy. First 5 LA’s business sector strategy centers on the successful engagement of business executives from L.A. County’s leading economic sectors and small business community to champion issues that impact our youngest children and their families. The business sector strategy’s key strategic partners, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, the National Association of Women Business Owners, and ReadyNation California, serve as important partners to identify, recruit, educate, and activate business leaders to become early childhood champions to advance First 5 LA’s policy and systems change agenda. First 5 LA’s tactic of activating “unexpected voices” from business leaders to advance our four outcomes for children prenatal to five and their families is a crucial strategy. With economic recovery efforts underway in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever for both public and private leaders in cross-sector industries to work with early childhood advocates to ensure that programs, funding, and systems are accessible, quality, aligned, and sustainable. Philanthropic leaders and early childhood advocates are increasingly recognizing the role of business in advancing their objectives, however the primary focus to date has been on larger companies. Small businesses are an untapped resource and could be valuable partners to create opportunities to support early childhood as a priority. Small business owners, and the smaller chambers that represent them, are leading members of their communities and provide important perspective and local solutions. This partnership with PPS supports this work by expanding the number and demographics of local business leaders targeted for recruitment to small business owners and leaders.

There are 30 million small businesses across the United States, representing over 90% of all businesses in the country. Furthermore, 43% of small businesses are found in low-wealth communities. Diverse entrepreneurs are starting businesses at higher rates, creating jobs and income in these economically-disadvantaged areas. Business ownership is a proven path to addressing the racial wealth gap. On average, business-owning households hold more than twice the wealth of their wage-earning peers and the wealth-creation impact is more pronounced for business owners of color. Knowing what is on the minds of small business owners can help identify priorities in a specific place or across the country. Additionally, support from small business can strengthen the case for policy proposals that advance healthy communities.
This Strategic Partnership with PPS not only expands First 5 LA’s business engagement strategy to small business owners but does so within the context of COVID-19 economic recovery effects and the systemic and historical inequities central to recent civil protests in our communities. PPS will identify and activate early childhood champions within the diverse and expansive Los Angeles small business community, with specific focus on First 5 LA’s 14 Best Start geographies. Specific sensitivity to the severe impact the pandemic has had on local cities’ economies, regional diversities, and 501(c)(6) operations (chambers of commerce and business associations with a tax exempt status) will be an important element of this project’s success.

Scope of Work:

Public Private Strategies, LLC will evaluate and expand First 5 LA’s Business Sector Engagement strategy to expand the number and demographics of local business leaders targeted for recruitment, with a specific focus on small businesses. This work will be centered within the context of the severe impact to small business by both the COVID-19 pandemic and the civil protests to advance First 5 LA’s four outcomes for children prenatal to five and their families.

• Develop network of small business leaders and local diversity chambers within Los Angeles County area engaged in early childhood issues.
• Expand the number of business leader targets to engage in First 5 LA activities for early childhood advocacy.
• Provide concise recommendations as to how First 5 LA can deepen their engagement with the business community.
• Inform strategic outreach and communications to business community for recruitment and activation.

Public Private Strategies LLC will pursue the following tactics:

• Meet with key members of the team including First 5 LA, partners, grantees, and other community leaders to gain insight into current business engagement work and opportunities for deeper engagement. Key meetings will include ReadyNation, LA Area Chamber of Commerce, early childhood advocates, and program collaborators. Within First 5 LA, the project will be informed and guided by Policy, Community Relations, ECE, Best Start, and Communities colleagues.
• Complete a scan and mapping of the business community on priorities that align with First 5 LA, to include business associations, philanthropic business organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary), and diversity chambers, with focus on gaps creating by the closure of community-based 501(c)(6)s.
• Partner with LA county representatives and state level advocates to align agendas and activity.
• Coordinate district meetings with elected officials and business leaders.
• Review current First 5 LA target list of organization and business leaders and make further recommendations.
• Assess and recommend C-Suite outreach and engagement.
• Review materials created in support of business engagement (e.g. talking points, communications, PowerPoints, follow-up reminders, etc.).
• Provide counsel and insight to First 5 LA team members in advance of engagement with other business organizations.
• Where appropriate, join First 5 LA members in presenting current work and strategic approach to business community.
• Assist with the coordination and alignment of LA County EC advocates’ varied touch points with the business community

Pursuant to the Procurement Policy, Strategic Partners of $75,000 or more in a fiscal year must be presented to the Board for approval. Staff is requesting an establishment of a Strategic Partnership for an amount not to exceed $104,999 to comply with this policy.
GOVERNANCE GUIDELINES #5 AND #6 (SUSTAINABILITY AND LEVERAGING):

**Sustainability:** First 5 LA’s support of a Strategic Partnership with Public Private Strategies, LLC will create long-term partnerships within the Los Angeles County’s business community to recruit and activate early childhood advocates to deliver key strategies in support of First 5 LA’s four outcomes for young children and their families. Milestone activities that measure this partnership’s sustainability include business leader’s internal organization change (adoption and promotion of family-friendly workplace policies and implementation of company-specific campaigns) and external advocacy (letters of support and Op Eds, hosting meetings with elected officials, attending advocacy trips, participating in panels and presentations.)

**Leveraging:** This partnership leverages other First 5 LA funds in support of the Business Sector Engagement Strategy, including strategic partnerships with ReadyNation California, the Mayor’s Fund of Long Beach, and UNITE-LA. Public Private Strategies’ relationship with philanthropic and business partners, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, National Association of Women Business Owners, AARP, and the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce further leverages this project with additional expertise, relationships, and 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

- [x] 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

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

Public Private Strategies’ level of expertise is based on their unique qualification to recruit, convene, and engage small business leaders in LA County through regional and diversity chambers coupled with their policy advocacy expertise and relevant community and philanthropic connections. They have a robust list of individual business relationships and specific expertise facilitating partnerships between the public and private sectors and organizing economic leaders to advocate and advance policy issues. Specific LA-based collaborations that leverage this work with additional expertise, relationships, and resources include an LA business scan and engagement event funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, LA Census Business Engagement Roundtable funded by Annie E. Casey Foundation, Women in Business Event at LA City Club sponsored by PayPal, and work with Southern California Grantmakers on opportunity zones and business forecasting. They advise strategic engagement for AARP’s Paid Family Leave campaign and the National Association of Women Business Owners. They hold key relationships with the US Chamber of Commerce, US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and other key national chamber organizations that leverage local relationships and collaborations. Additionally, Public Private Strategies, LLC are uniquely qualified because of their intersection of experience working with both the small business community and statewide business sector coalitions. Their executive leadership founded both the Small
This proposed project aligns with First 5 LA’s 2020-2028 Strategic Plan because it exemplifies our intentional efforts to strategically partner with community leaders and organizations to strengthen public systems that serve children prenatal to five. The Strategic Plan explicitly states the need for active engagement with community leaders and organizations to work in partnership with First 5 LA to achieve our core Four Results for Children and Families. Furthermore, our systems change work requires we work with local leaders at the state, county, and local level to change the conditions that affect child development and family well-being. Partnerships with the business community impact long-term systems change goals by creating both policy change and will building. Lastly, this project specifically addresses these two strategic priorities:

- **Strategic priority #1: Strengthen Public and Community Systems**
  Recruiting and activating unexpected champions, such as business leaders, deepens First 5 LA’s advocacy voice in ensuring that the systems that serve young children and their families are quality, accessibility, aligned, and sustainable.

- **Strategic Priority #2: Advance and Build on Community Experiences**
  Identifying existing and aspirational small business relationships and local chambers of commerce allows us to connect and maximize local resources and relationships within our 14 Best Start geographies that advance local solutions to early prevention, intervention and learning.

**NEXT STEPS:**
Staff anticipates returning to the Board on September 10, 2020 to approve the establishment of a Strategic Partnership with Public Private Strategies, LLC in the Amount of $104,999 for a period of 24 months and present a contract for Board approval if the contract amount is over $75,000.