

MOTION

In the summer of 2013, Council District 15 conducted a community needs assessment in Watts. In one month, 700 residents completed surveys, describing the opportunities and challenges for Watts, as well as what they want to see change in their neighborhood. One of the common issues identified by residents was a need for access to information about City services. Watts residents want City government and services to be more visible, accessible and responsive.

Currently, the City leases space for LAPD and the Council District 15 Watts district office in a privately-owned building at 10221 Compton Ave. Immediately west of this building is a cluster of three City buildings: the former Watts library, the former civic center building, and the former Fire Station 65 (1501, 1513 and 1525 E 103rd St). The former fire station was vacated by LAFD 2005, the former library was vacated by LAPL in 1996, and was most recently used as adjunct space for a former tenant of the civic building.

These underutilized and historic civic buildings provide a unique opportunity to create a renewed Watts Civic Center, bringing government and the City closer to Watts residents. This effort is aligned with other future improvements and projects that will reinforce this block as a center of civic and social activities for Watts, such as the upcoming Children's Institute expansion, designed by Frank Gehry, and the 103rd St streetscape improvement plan, and, is consistent with the guiding principles of the City's Strategic Real Estate Plan (CF 10-0168) which states: "Long-term office needs should be satisfied with long-term solutions; Owning property for long-term needs is always preferable to leasing."

Relocating LAPD and the Council office to these City-owned buildings will save over \$120,000 in annual lease costs.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the City Administrative Officer, with the assistance of the Bureau of Engineering, to identify funding and report with the actions necessary to renovate the Watts Civic Center buildings, and include the project in the City's annual Capital Improvement Expenditure Program.

Presented by Joe Buscaino
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Councilmember, 15th District

Seconded by Gil Cedillo

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