County motions, studies and reports, but no deal.

In that same time, distant academic institutions have joined with municipalities to build medical tech hubs in San Francisco’s Mission Bay, on New York’s Roosevelt Island, and numerous other places besides. L.A. is at risk — and by no means for the first time — of talking big talk about developing its economic and intellectual infrastructure, yet losing out to other places because local politics and arcane decision-making protocols get in the way.

That’s a shame. Much of Los Angeles’ academic, public and business potential is embodied in the parties to this would-be deal, and in other institutions that have much to gain if it moves forward and much to lose if it fails. L.A.’s far-flung development patterns have allowed biomed innovators to emerge in various nodes around the county, from Valencia to Torrance to the San Gabriel Valley, but they are missing the benefits of a concentrated center. As it happens, USC’s medical campus could be that center.

But it’s also on a hill, giving the impression of separation from neighboring communities. Does the county want benefits for the community? Just name them, USC says, and let’s work it out.

So what’s the holdup?

Talk of a bioscience (or biomed, or biotech — the words are used interchangeably) cluster located in the area between Lincoln Heights and Boyle Heights has been going on (and off) for more than a decade. There have been L.A. County motions, studies and reports, but no deal.

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