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## Supervisors Approve Land Swap for New OC Animal Shelter

A new Orange County Animal Shelter will be built on 10 acres of land at the former Tustin Marine base currently earmarked for the South Orange County Community College District under a concept approved unanimously Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisors approved in concept a letter of intent with the college district to expedite a swap of its property for a similarly sized parcel of nearby base land slated for eventual ownership by the County. The college district Board of Trustees approved the letter of intent on Monday.

The arrangement will allow the County to swiftly begin development plans for a new facility to replace the aging Orange County Animal Shelter in Orange, built in 1941. Supervisors always intended to build a new shelter at the Tustin base but negotiations with the Navy, which owns the property, dragged on for years. The base closed in 1999.

"Building a new animal shelter is important so that the County can care for animals, pet owners and people interested in pet adoption in the best way," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Todd Spitzer, who represents the Third District where the new facility will be built. "Fast tracking this project is a priority. Orange County will be a leader in animal care."

"This is a very satisfying end to what became a very frustrating set of circumstances," said Supervisor Shawn Nelson, Fourth District, who has pushed for swifter action on the new shelter. "We had a log jam through no one's fault and this action clears the way."

Board of Supervisors Vice Chair Lisa Bartlett thanked the college district for agreeing to expedite the land swap. "As a supervisor and an animal lover, this is a great result," she said.

A new OC Animal Shelter is expected to cost about \$25 million, with the bulk of the funds to come from the 18 cities that contract with the County for animal care services in Anaheim, Brea, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, Orange, Placentia, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Ana, Stanton, Tustin, Villa Park and Yorba Linda. The County will contribute the land and \$4.4 million.

Supervisor Michelle Steel, who represents the Second District, said other cities might be interested in contracting with the County for shelter services once the new state-of-the-art facility opens. "We are planning a facility that will provide excellent care for animals across the county," she said.

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