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Design-Builder, Land Swap Approved for New OC Animal Shelter

The Board of Supervisors selected a designer-builder and took other actions Tuesday to fast-track construction beginning in July on a new \$35 million Orange County Animal Shelter to be built on 10 acres of land at the former Tustin Marine base.

Supervisors awarded a contract with Snyder Langston LP for design and construction of the facility, which is expected to cost up to \$32.8 million. Additional costs for roadway improvements, utilities and other upgrades will boost the project to \$35 million. The County's contribution is providing the land and \$5 million, with the remainder covered by cities that contract for animal care services based on average percentage of shelter use.

The new shelter will be built on leased land currently owned by the South Orange County Community College District. The property will eventually be swapped for land at the base that hasn't yet been released to the County by the Navy. A lease with the college district was approved Tuesday.

"I commend my colleagues for their leadership in moving forward with this very long-awaited project," said Board of Supervisors [Chairwoman Lisa Bartlett](#), who represents the Fifth District. "We're thrilled to be anticipating the opening of a new Orange County Animal Shelter in the fall of 2017."

[Supervisor Todd Spitzer](#), whose Third District includes the Marine base, praised the creation of a formal advisory board that will include representatives from rescue groups and others to provide input into the facility's design.

"It is imperative to hear from the public and to have the community involved in every step," Supervisor Spitzer said. "We are committed to improving service with the new shelter and we want Orange County to be a leader in animal care."

The Design Advisory Board will advise OC Animal Care and OC Public Works, including representatives from contract cities, rescue groups, the shelter's Community Outreach Committee, OC Animal Care staff and the veterinary community. Public forums are planned to obtain community input on the work of the design board and the contractor.

The current Orange County Animal Shelter in Orange was built in 1941. The County set aside \$5 million in 1995 to build a new shelter at the base, which closed in 1999. However, land the County originally envisioned for the shelter won't be released by the Navy until at least 2017.

“We knew we had an urgent situation with an outdated shelter and we came up with some very creative solutions to move this forward,” said [Supervisor Shawn Nelson](#), Fourth District. “This is a great outcome.”

“I look forward to getting the public’s input throughout this process as Orange County builds a new animal shelter,” [Supervisor Andrew Do](#), First District, said.

Cities will have until the end of May to approve revised participation agreements with the County for use of the new shelter. Cities currently contracting with the County are 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. Laguna Hills and Rancho Santa Margarita recently decided to pursue other animal care services instead of moving to the new facility.

Board of Supervisors [Vice Chair Michelle Steel](#), who represents the Second District, said the County is proud of its partnership with cities and will continue to examine ways of improving service. “We look forward to partnering with our cities to continue providing excellent care for animals across the county,” she said.

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