



NEWS

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas L.A. County Board of Supervisors, 2nd District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS PRAISES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' EFFORTS TO BUILD A NEW MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOSPITAL

On the eve of the Board of Supervisors' pivotal vote on a plan to open a new Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today expressed appreciation to his colleagues for making the issue a top priority.

"Because of the board's direction and the Chief Executive Office's steady execution, we have now moved beyond the closure of the MLK Medical Center two years ago, to the point where we are now on track to open a new hospital in 2012," the Supervisor said.

On Tuesday, the Board will consider giving the CEO authorization to proceed with negotiations with the University of California to operate the hospital, including presenting the County's proposal for the new hospital.

The Board will also consider approving a capital program for construction of the new medical facilities, contingent on the UC Board of Regents voting at its Sept. 18 meeting to enter into an agreement with the county to operate the hospital. The financial issues will come back to the Board of Supervisors for authorization.

A new, 120-bed hospital devoted to quality patient care in state-of-the-art facilities would provide much needed services to a region with the least access to health care in the county.

Residents and stakeholders are bursting with anticipation. Hundreds of people, some groups arriving buses, are expected to attend Tuesday's meeting to thank the board for making a new hospital a top priority.

Upon taking office last December, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas visited the hospital site to publically announce his initiative to "jump start" the process of restoring a full service hospital with emergency room services to the area.

On the Supervisors' hundredth day in office, the Board announced the County had reached agreement with the University of California and State of California on a framework to open a private, non-profit medical facility under an independent board of director, equally controlled by the county and the UC.

The excitement in the community was palpable during an Aug. 1 Town Hall meeting hosted by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. Due to an overwhelming response, the gathering had to be relocated from the H. Claude Hudson Auditorium to a larger venue at the nearby Charles Drew University Magnet High School Lecture Hall.

The Town Hall was the latest efforts by the Supervisor to inform stakeholders, residents and the general public about our work to open the new hospital.

"We have reached a point in the saga of the MLK hospital where all that stands between building a new hospital on the existing site is a vote by the Board of Supervisors that is contingent on an agreement with the University of California to provide clinical services," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.